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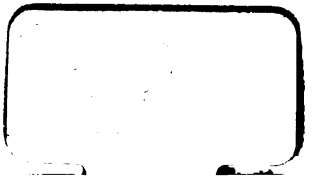

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MEMORANDA

OF A

JOURNEY TO MOSCOW.

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DEDICATION.

My Dear Husband,

This Memento of one of our many happy trips together is dedicated with respect and affection to you by

Your wife,

FANNY M. THOMSON.

Ellis 25 Jan, 1947

PREFACE.

In entrusting this record of an interesting journey to the hands of the printer, it has been rather my intention to provide a means of recalling pleasant reminiscences than to make any attempt at a literary production. But from the knowledge that many friends will see, and perhaps read the volume, rough notes, intelligible enough to ourselves, have been strung together in such a manner as it is hoped will prove at least tolerably interesting to other readers.

MEMORANDA

OF A

JOURNEY TO MOSCOW,

IN THE YEAR 1856.

On the 19th of August, in the year of the Emperor Alexander's coronation, we (that is my husband and myself) started from Liverpool, by railway, for London. We stopped that night at the Bedford Hotel, in Covent Garden, in company with so much luggage as to excite the commiseration of both the landlady and her visitors, one of whom feelingly asked if we carried our beds with us!

The chief incidents of the next day were sundry spasms and a horrid adventure of sea sickness, in crossing from Dover to Calais, which latter place we reached late in the evening, and concluded a disagreeable day by a still more

N Y P L

disagreeable struggle to rescue our protegés, the portmanteaus, from the hands of the Douaniers. By a little exertion and a great deal of patience we succeeded in overcoming this difficulty, and after having shown our passports, congratulated ourselves that our troubles were over. One unexpected embarrassment, however, presented itself to two companions who had joined us at London, a brother of my husband's and a friend. Although they were engineers, they could not do without soap. The next difficulty was where to find it; too dark to see a map of the town, and having no map of the town to see, we were compelled to trust to that infallible instinct which always leads a woman, in matters of the toilet, and we found the article at a small smallware shop, in a small street in an obscure corner of the town. Previous to the search for soap, the necessity for it had arisen, in consequence of our companions having been attacked by a strange desire to wash their hands at the Hotel Dessin, to which place we had conveyed ourselves on leaving the passport bureau. The evening was passed, as foreign evenings usually are at hotels, and consisted of grumbling,

supper (a great deal of supper), and very little bed, especially for myself, for a repetition of my illness seized me early in the morning; and as if that were not sufficient to awaken me, one of our friends was heard tramping about the next room, vainly endeavouring to clothe himself at both ends, for he had lost his hat and his boots. Consultations and breakfast followed for those who were fit for either, and the result was a determination to start for Antwerp. In consequence of my indisposition, however, it was found necessary that I should occupy two seats in the railway carriage, which the politeness and consideration of the officials allowed me to retain. I therefore took care not to recover before reaching Antwerp, which was late in the evening. The Hotel du Parc was selected as our home, and we found it deserving of the name; for I had occasion to test the kindness of the hostess, who was an English lady, by requiring her attention in a continued illness of two days, which time my husband was away with his two friends at the Island of Beveland. They returned on the afternoon of the 23rd, and found me sufficiently recovered to join them at dinner. This was

our second visit to Antwerp, which spared me the necessity of sight-seeing, although I could not resist the temptation of running out, ill as I was, to see the great Rubens in the Cathedral. Unfortunately for me, however, on arriving there the picture was covered as usual, during service, but by silver and persuasion I succeeded in getting the curtain withdrawn. On the 24th we were again *en route*, by rail, for Brussels, in which place we rested until the 27th, at the Hotel de Bellevue. Here we lost our companions, who, after wishing us a bon voyage, turned their backs upon us and returned to England.

CHAP. II.

Now commenced our real journey, the first stage in which was from hence to Rotterdam, and here we warn all innocent travellers against too great faith in the promises of Bradshaw, which, however, only requires to be understood to be appreciated. On this occasion we were led to believe, either by our own ignorance, or by some unaccountable error in the guide, that we should be carried all the way by rail. Imagine my comfort at the prospect, after all the horrors of the sea voyage across the Channel, from the effects of which I had only just recovered, in looking forward to the quiet journey of seventy four miles by land; but imagine again, dear reader, if you can, the effect upon my already shattered nerves, and disgust of steamboats, when my husband, alarmed by an unusually long stoppage of the train, put out his head, and drew it in again with a terrified

exclamation of "water! water! steamboat! and no more rail a-head!" At that moment my repugnance to water was so great that I was almost inclined to give up the whole idea of proceeding further, but having only a short time for reflection, and seeing the luggage at once removed into the horrid vessel, this determination did not come to maturity, and before I was properly awakened to my fate found myself again on the sea sailing to Rotterdam; but, thank goodness, it was *not* the sea, we found it was an inland bay, which had not quite made up its mind whether to be a lake or a canal. In those parts where the width diminished we had an opportunity of seeing the ingenuity and skill exercised by the Dutch engineers in protecting their country from the inroads of the sea. The principal feature of these defences consists of a bulwark of earth, protected by bundles of brushwood, called *faissons*, firmly tied up, and laid with the thick end towards the sea; poor as this defence may seem, it is more powerful than were the commands of Canute, for it has effectually kept back for ages the waves which he could not stop for a moment. In other parts the earthwork is

formed with a sloping direction towards the waves, and it is protected by a thick coating of straw carefully spread over the surface and firmly pegged down: this is the *Krammit*.

The journey I so much dreaded when I first saw the steamer proved, on the contrary, a pleasure, for the novelty of a first view of Holland, and the incessant activity of as many windmills as would have roused five hundred Quixotes into wrath, furnished me with interest and amusement until late in the evening, when we arrived at Rotterdam. It was quite dark when we landed. On quitting the steamer our passport was demanded, and we were politely told by the officers that it must be left with them, and would afterwards be sent to our hotel; we were evidently not expected, as there was no carriage in waiting, and how we were to be conveyed there with our baggage seemed to puzzle what little ingenuity was possessed by some half dozen sturdy Dutchmen who had surrounded us; many plans were proposed, but as there were no vehicles to be had, we resolved to walk, and allow the *Koffers* to get there as they liked. We then made the best of our way to the Hotel des Pays Bas, situated on the quay,

called the *Boompjes*, and to our great surprise we found that it possessed a marble hall, which, also to our great discomfort, was getting itself scrubbed for hours after we were in bed, otherwise we should have said the house was quiet and comfortable; as we arrived late we merely refreshed ourselves with supper, and, as a matter of course, a glass of schiedam. The next morning we were up and out early to see the city, which is the second in Holland for commerce, and has a population of about a hundred thousand. As this was the first Dutch town we had seen, we found considerable amusement in it, being much struck with the strange and picturesque intermixture in the centre of the town. Dutch beetle-browed gables and bright summer looking trees, ships of all sorts, with their masts towering above the roofs of the houses, the flags intermingling with the smoke of the chimneys over the whole extent of the view. The conveyance for goods along the quays here is remarkable, as it consists of a primitive kind of sledge, upon which the load is placed, with little kegs of water in front having several holes in each, through which the water is jerked upon the pavement to diminish the

friction. The statue of Erasmus, who was born here in the year 1467, stands in the market place, and is a very fine bronze. In the Groote Kerk are several monuments to their admirals, peculiarly illustrative of Holland's past naval power. By the aid of an energetic and intelligent coachman, a carriage and pair of the black horses, so peculiar to the country, we succeeded in devouring the whole of the lions here, and arrived at the *Ijzeren Spoorweg* in time to catch the 12.26 train for the Hague, a pleasant ride of three quarters of an hour. On arriving we entrusted the safe keeping of our luggage into the hands of a civil railway official, and again availing ourselves of the services of a valet de place, a "glas wagen," and stirring coachman, we drove at once to the Museum and Picture Gallery: here are some of the finest specimens of the Dutch Masters. Paul Potter's well known Bull, which dates from 1647, and we were told is valued at £5000. Rembrandt's desecting piece is here, and also his two wives. A sight of the two former pictures is well worth the whole journey.

After inspecting the other rooms, we paid the Bull another visit, and left him with regret,

hastening to the Royal Palace, where we fortunately got admittance at once, and found it equal to a good mansion for a nobleman in England. We next went to the Market-place, where stood the most remarkable feature of the Hague, the storks, which, like the bears of Berne, and the eagles of Geneva, are maintained and protected with great veneration by the inhabitants, who even provide timber shelves upon the roofs of their houses, in the hopes of enticing them to build their nests there. For years this bird has been the crest of the Hague, and a very appropriate one, for the marshy condition of the country is particularly suitable to them. On this occasion they were remarkably expressive, standing as they did in the desolate Market-place, drooping and drenched with a drizzling rain, the perfect picture of desolation. Less fortunate are the poor dogs, which, being made beasts of burthen throughout the country, are used to drag the fish carts from the neighbouring port, Scheveningen, distant about three miles. It is a fishing village, which serves as the port of the Hague. It was from this place that our second Charles embarked on his return to England, and the

Prince of Orange landed here from London at the downfall of Louis Bonaparte, in 1813. We next went to *"T'Huis in t'Bosch,"* which is situated, as its name implies, in the middle of a wood, about a mile from the city. The drives here are very fine, being lined on both sides with magnificent forest trees. The palaces contain some very excellent portraits, by Vandyke and others.

On leaving here we returned to the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities, which is in the lower storey of the Maurits Huis, containing a rare and extraordinary collection of treasures from China and Japan. And as the Dutch are the only nation admitted into the latter country, one has the opportunity of procuring here what cannot be had elsewhere, and at moderate prices; but as our stay was so short, we could only give them a flying inspection. The time had arrived for us to go and reclaim our disconsolate portmanteaus and rugs, and to take our places by the 4.22 train for Amsterdam. Our coachman and valet, who appeared very reluctant to part with us, declared it an impossibility to catch the train, but by a little persuasion and extra *Trink-geld,* the whip was well applied,

and we arrived in ample time to take our tickets and purchase a little refreshment, of which, by this time, we stood in need.

I reluctantly left the Hague, having formed, on the short acquaintance, a favourable impression of its beauty as a town, but not of its salubrity as a residence, on account of the numerous ditches of stagnant water which form the boundaries of the fields in this part of the country, and are particularly numerous and offensive near the city. Indeed, so flat and marshy is the whole country, that it reminded me strongly of the Pontine Marshes. In travelling to Amsterdam, we frequently saw the characteristic black cattle, with white spots, half immersed in the bog, and feeding off its surface. The ditches themselves are so overgrown with weeds as to be with difficulty distinguished from the scarcely more solid land, and the absence of all other fences gives a peculiar aspect to the landscape.

CHAP. III.

On our arrival in Amsterdam, we were astonished to find the whole city in a state of commotion, the King of Holland having arrived on the previous day, from his residence at the Hague, for the purpose of inaugurating a new monument, which had been erected in the principal square, before the palace, in commemoration of the revolution of 1830. The display of flags was greater than I remember seeing on any other occasion, and was, I believe, truly expressive of the people's enthusiasm in welcoming their sovereign. The most striking feature, on entering the town, is the great number of canals, which cut it up into nearly one hundred islands, and are crossed by three hundred bridges. Some are of great importance, one canal being one hundred and forty feet wide, having, besides a considerable width of quay or street, and excellent houses on each

side, four of the largest enclose the town in a semicircle of four parallel lines. There is a great resemblance to Venice in the presence of these canals, with the advantage, however, of a wide quay for carriages, or other land conveyances, one of these is peculiar, and in some degree resembles the one mentioned with the water kegs at Rotterdam; but in this case the kegs are dispensed with, and the driver, with a leather thong upon the end of a stick, drops oil upon the slides instead of the water in the previous instance. The houses are remarkably fine, chiefly of brick, and as Erasmus says, "The people, like crows, live on the tops of trees," for the entire city is built upon piles. It may be well to mention that we had an opportunity of seeing the manner in which piles were driven, and our ideas of the boasted superiority of the Dutch in this particular work were very much modified; for we found small undressed tops of round fir trees, such as are used in England for temporary paling, driven down in places where an Englishman would put fine logs of beech. The only machine which appeared to be used was nothing more than a common ringing engine, or a block hung to three legs, with the

weight or ram suspended by a rope, at the other end of which the men pulled and sung at each stroke.

This peculiar feature is rendered necessary by the soft and unstable nature of the substratum, which is nothing better than stiff mud; an alluvial deposit at the mouth of the Amstel which forms a delta at this point, the base of which is called the Y, and empties itself into the Zuider Zee.

Besides the vast number of canals, Amsterdam possesses a fine harbour and extensive docks, which are constructed in a position exactly the reverse of the ordinary way of making docks in England, for instead of the water being brought into an inland excavation, here banks are run out to enclose a piece of the bay, which answers the twofold purpose of forming the docks and defending the town from the inroads of the sea.

The bustle and traffic on the quays, as well as in the interior of the city, impressed me with the assurance that this was a great commercial capital; not, however, so much absorbed in trade as to forget the fine arts, for here is an extensive picture gallery, almost exclusively

filled with the works of native artists, amongst which are most conspicuous Van der Helst's picture of "The City Guard of Amsterdam met to celebrate the treaty of Münster, in 1648," consisting of twenty-five figures, the whole of which are said to be portraits. There are also many of Rembrandt's productions, the most celebrated of which is "The Night Watch." Wouvermans and Vandyke have also many works here.

The Palace, which was, previous to the reign of Louis Bonaparte, the Town Hall, is a vast stone building, containing many subjects of interest, but being the residence of the King when he visits Amsterdam, and as he was then occupying it, we could not obtain admittance. We are told that it stands upon nearly fourteen thousand piles, each of which is driven seventy feet into the mud.

One of the most important and interesting sights of Amsterdam is the large Sluice Gates, which are a short distance out of the city, on the Haarlem Road, and which we were anxious to see, but the difficulty was how to get there, as there are no public vehicles immediately available, and we should have been grateful for

even the most uncivil London cabby that had ever tormented us. After a diligent search we obtained such information as led us to a stable, the presiding genius of which was a surly old Dutchman, who, at our request, issued his command in a tempest of hard words to an unjacketed old caliban, who was mending harness, an occupation he seemed reluctant to relinquish, as he continued it for a considerable time after receiving instructions to provide us with a vehicle. We found, however, that his attachment arose from necessity, as he had no other means of tackling the horses; but after a little patience we found ourselves under his guidance to the Sluice Gates, which regulate the waters of the Y and the inland drainage of the country, by being shut when the tide is flowing, to prevent its influx, and opened as it recedes to allow the penned-up water to escape and mix with the ocean. As Amsterdam and the surrounding country, and, in fact, I may say the greater part of Holland, is below the level of the sea,* which is kept back by large embankments, called dykes, protected in the manner

* In many parts as much as twenty-five feet, and during extraordinary tides as much as thirty feet.

previously described, some idea of the extent of which may be obtained from the statement that £600,000 are yearly expended in their maintenance, which sum is raised by a tax levied for that purpose. A constant and anxious supervision is exercised over this protection by an organized staff of watchmen, who are specially instructed for the purpose in a college at Delf, and appointed by Government commissioners.

The greatest anxiety prevails when a strong gale from the N.W. is blowing, which has the effect of raising the tide above its ordinary height. At these times large gangs of men are levied by the authorities, and kept in readiness to hasten to any place of threatened danger, on hearing an alarm given by the watchman's bell.

The preservation of these defences, as may be easily imagined, is a continual source of uneasiness to the Dutch, as they are aware that the whole existence of their country depends upon them, and conscious as they are of the many calamities which have happened to it in former ages, we cannot wonder at the extent of their precaution. The most remarkable and disastrous of these events occurred in the thirteenth century, overwhelming a whole

country and converting fertile lands into what is now the Zuyder Zee and the Gulf of Dollert. In the sixteenth century another fearful, but more dispersed, inundation took place, by these awful calamities, one hundred and eighty thousand human beings were suddenly launched into eternity, a number equal to the whole population of the town of Birmingham.

So patriotic are the Dutch, that they have on various occasions voluntarily laid portions of their country under water, by cutting the dykes and opening the sluices, rather than submit to an invading power; actuated by the same feeling which prompted the unfortunate Muscovites to sacrifice their city by fire to save their country from the hands of the French. Thus we see that the most opposing elements of nature, in the cause of justice, can be turned by the hand of Providence to protect the weak.

They have not only to guard against the inroads of the sea, but are exposed to great danger of floods from inland rivers, the bottoms of which are in many cases above the level of the adjoining land. The Rhine is the most important, and often does immense damage by overflowing its banks, more especially during a

thaw, when large icebergs are carried down from Germany, and often get jammed fast in narrow parts of the river, obstructing the water in its course, and causing it to flow over its artificial embankments, producing immense loss to the owners of the low lands contiguous to it. One of these disasters, the greatest of late years, happened in the winter of 1799.

So much for the sluice gates; and now back to Amsterdam, in company with old caliban, whose Dutch proved to be very intelligible to me. I doubt if he could say as much of mine. On the way he pointed out many objects of interest, and we parted from him at our own door, the Hotel des Pays Bas, with greater pleasure than we expected would have been the case when first we met.

Our next acquaintance was the dinner, which proved worthy of our regard, and possessing, as we did, cosmopolitan appetites, everything seemed good that was on the table, particularly the beef steaks. This dish, which is usually considered to be a peculiarity to England, can be had here in plenty and equal perfection, as the country is so fertile and the pasturage favourable for feeding cattle.

The well-known Dutch cheese presents itself at breakfast and at every other meal, and from the same cause derives its excellence. We cannot, however, say much in praise of the water, as it is brackish and excessively bad, the only supply fit for drinking purposes in all the low parts of the country is brought from Utrecht, and the Government invariably make it a stipulation that all bodies of men engaged on public works shall be supplied by their employers with a certain quantity per day from that place. Much as it would have pleased us to remain and learn more of Holland and its inhabitants, we were compelled to make preparations for departing on the next day. Our opportunity of forming an opinion of the place had certainly not been great, but from what we saw of the people they appeared to be enterprising, businesslike and wealthy. It was Saturday morning at half past five when we left our hotel, by omnibus, for the Station; and here I would claim the sympathy of all those English ladies who are accustomed to receive the apologies of gentlemen who smoke in a carriage. Imagine, if you can, a dozen Dutchmen with a dozen Dutch built pipes, each

lighted and vomiting forth horrible clouds of smoke, as only Dutchmen can; and then conceive my feelings at being crammed up in a corner in the midst of it. It would be charitable to suppose that the absence of all politeness on their part arose from the fact that the density of the atmosphere prevented their seeing me. Our hotel was in the centre of the town, and the Railway Station outside of it, but after rattling over one bridge after another, and chasing by the sides of a complete chain of canals, we dashed through "The Weesper Gate," ready to begin a new journey. There we were surprised to find old caliban waiting to bid us adieu, having brought a fare to the station, and detected his old acquaintances of the sluice gates.

CHAP. IV.

We had entered a carriage on the Dutch Rhenish Railway, and went out of it at Emmerich, after a journey of about four hours. The trains on this excellent and well managed line have a guard at each end, whose costume reminded me of our own Robin Hood—even the little horn was there, and it was by an interchange of signals from this instrument that the train was started. Emmerich being on the Prussian frontier, we had again to undergo the passport process, through which ordeal we passed with more success than through the customs, as in consequence of our desire to possess the luxury of clean gloves on the journey we were subject to the officious attention of an inferior officer of that department, who appeared to think that one pair of gloves was sufficient to last a person for a lifetime, but by an appeal to his superior this mistake

in his education was corrected, and our gloves restored.

Our next step was on board the Rhine steamer, which was in waiting ready to convey us to Dusseldorf, where we arrived at eight o'clock in the evening. All I have to say of this part of the Rhine is that there is nothing to say about it, as the country is flat and uninteresting. To compensate for this, we turned our attention to matters on board, and by the assistance of some agreeable companions succeeded in enjoying the journey. One with whom I had occasion to converse had such a peculiar accent in his French as led me to doubt of his being one of that nation, and on his discovering that I perceived it, he revealed himself as an Italian with great delight, and insisted on introducing me to his wife and daughter, who were below bemoaning the absence of any one to whom they could speak in their native tongue. It took but a short time for me to make the most of my small qualifications in that way; but we were ultimately so well pleased with each other as to astonish the German tenants of the cabin with our volubility, and as they either could not

enjoy it as much as we did, or wished to give us an opportunity of enjoying it more, they gradually left the cabin in our sole possession, until we at last burst out into song, in which mother, daughter and visitor all joined with intense gusto. We stayed only the night in Dusseldorf, and started early next morning for Hanover by railway, passing through a country rich both in minerals and agriculture.

For the first fifty miles we passed through a country bearing a strong resemblance to some of our own mineral districts—the same smoky aspect, and many engines employed in raising coals, which are found here in great plenty, and of excellent quality. The spirit with which these mines are worked bears evidence of the thriving state of the country. After leaving the mineral district, we passed through the rich and fertile fields of Westphalia. At Bad Oeynhausen, a few miles before reaching Minden, the train stopped for some time, and we had an opportunity of seeing the peculiar method here adopted of crystallising salt from mineral brine, which is found by boring deep into the earth, and pumped up a height of twenty or thirty feet, to the top of large stacks of brushwood,

through which it trickles down, allowing the water to evaporate from the great extent of surface thus afforded, leaving the salt ready for refining.

At Minden Station there is a short time allowed for refreshments, probably to give visitors an opportunity of ascertaining if the far-famed Westphalia ham tastes at home as well as his brothers abroad. After a ride of two hours and a half from this place we arrived at Hanover in a state of anxiety, lest we should be too late for table d'hôte at the Hotel Royal, which is a large new building near to the Railway Station, to which place we hurried after accepting the attentions of a volunteer porter, who won us over by his forcible promises that the luggage should follow instantly, which was a great inducement to me, as I desired to rearrange my toilet before dinner. I entered my dressing-room fully under the impression that my particular box was at least at the foot of the stairs endeavouring to get after me, and turned round confidently to receive it with a smiling welcome; but, no! not a sign of either promising porter or his load. Visions of dinner began to present themselves forcibly to my mind—nice viands and ragouts of all sorts—

when bang went the dinner bell, and no porter in sight; bang went my bell quickly after it; one messenger after another was sent for the lost luggage, when, at last, thank goodness, the promising porter himself appeared in sight, and my fears were in some measure allayed, as I knew that it would take me but a short time to prepare for dinner; but, oh! ye powers of patience! the man gravely said, with as much consequence as though he were calling upon us to admire his punctuality, that "the '*Gepäck*' would be here directly," but *directly* in Hanover evidently meant half an hour, for by that time, and only after making my husband into a messenger, the luggage came, or rather was escorted by a regiment of four sturdy fellows, who made as much as they could of their labour, exclaiming in chorus, "*Ach! Ach! Gott, das ist uns tüchtig sauer geworden.*" The impulses of hunger overpowered any desire I might have possessed to do justice to the claims of the toilet. I, however, did make myself presentable, and although the dinner was half over when we entered the *Speisezimmer*, we were not much disappointed, as table d'hôte dinners are not usually very warm to begin with.

After dinner we drove out to our work, that is sight-seeing, and were pleased to find that comfort is one of the items taken into consideration in furnishing the cars here, for there were suspended in the corners two neat cushions, which could be detached and used as the occupant might think fit. Our first course was to the Waterloo Platz, where stands a fine stone column, upwards of a hundred and sixty feet in height, with a figure of Victory on the top. This figure, and the name of the place in which the column stands, are sufficiently indicative to an Englishman of the reason why it stands there! The names of their soldiers who fell in the battle are inscribed upon it; and it is worthy of remark that the names of privates are mentioned as well as the officers.

In the new part of the town are many fine erections and clean streets. They form a great contrast to the older district, where there are narrow streets and curious old top-heavy Gothic buildings, bending with age, and venerable in their antiquity.

The Theatre is a magnificent edifice, and near to it are some pleasant walks, shaded by trees, which, no doubt, will render them very

agreeable in summer. Indeed, I got quite in love with this little capital, and left with the resolution to pay it another and a longer visit, a determination which has not left me to this moment!

CHAP. V.

The next morning we left our hotel and walked across the square to the *Eisenbahn* station, which stands at the opposite side, and is a fine building, with spacious platforms, covered by an ornamental roof, constructed of timber in a novel manner. We found the carriages, as usual on German lines, exceedingly comfortable, and our journey to Berlin was commenced by passing through a well cultivated country to Brunswick, a distance of forty five miles; there the train stopped an hour, which gave us an opportunity of seeing another of these old Saxon towns, this one being interesting as the cradle of our present British dynasty; in passing the palace, which is a large new classic building, we saw a number of the Duke's body guard, the brave black Brunswickers, whose remarkable costume and curious device of a skull and crossed bones, renders them

interesting, apart from any feeling which we may have had in seeing the veritable "*Schwarzen Ritter.*"

The walks around the town are in the form of a Boulevard, and planted with trees and shrubs; we were, however, compelled to be contented with a passing view, the short hour, as it appeared to us, having expired. In passing the cathedral we thought of our poor Queen Caroline, whose troubled head is lying there in peace. At the station we found the very attentive guard who had kindly taken charge of our luggage, and he accompanied us part way on our journey; at every stoppage the salute of "*Reisen Sie glücklich*" was invariably given at our carriage windows, and had a most agreeable effect, coming as it did voluntarily from people who had no hopes of being paid for their civility. At Magdeburg we had another hour's stoppage, which we made use of this time on foot. The buildings here, at least what we saw of them, are large and handsome, and the defences of the town, part of which are seen on approaching by the railway, are strong enough apparently now to resist any foe; would that they had been so two hundred and thirty years ago, to have

saved the unfortunate inhabitants from the inhuman Tilly. After leaving the station we crossed the Elbe, which is here a large river; between this place and Potsdam the country is rather uninteresting, but one thing we particularly noticed was the great number of triangular sails which are to be seen on the navigable rivers in this part of Germany, and as the country is flat and the view so extensive, sails can be seen, apparently on dry land, where the water is concealed by distance.

The line passes near to the palace of Sans Souci, and through Potsdam, which is prettily situated on the margin of a lake formed by the river Havel, which flows into the Elbe, fifty miles lower down, at Havelberg. The fine white stone houses, and the agreeable contrasting green trees mingle their shadows in the waters below. This place bears the same relation to Berlin that Richmond does to London; and, as it was drawing towards evening, the carriage, of which we had had undisturbed possession from Hanover, was speedily filled by Berliners returning home. And if it is true that they who have little luggage are happy, these must have been superlatively so, for they had none.

We were welcomed at Berlin by a terrific thunder shower. The scene which the station presented was worthy of the pencil of a Dickens or a Thackeray; passengers with no luggage hurrying home to get out of the rain, exulting in their freedom, and knocking about the unfortunate minority who had plenty, and must look after it, amongst whom we were numbered. It was, however, some consolation to find that we were not alone in our dilemma, for as we approached the door, anxiously looking out for the return of a porter, who had gone in a vain search for a car, we were nearly annihilated by the weight of the anathemas falling from the lips of a tall German of the decorated order, whose anger had been awakened by the same disappointment that had fallen to our lot, the unburthened passengers from Potsdam, who had rushed out with selfish impetuosity, having driven off with all the cars!

After waiting what appeared to us an unreasonable time, our faithful messenger returned true to his word, and, to our great joy, he had, indeed, brought a cab, into which we immediately got, congratulating ourselves on being so comfortably sheltered from the storm,

when we were suddenly recalled to the anxiety and uncertainty of our position, by a contest, which was going on between our ally, the porter, who was endeavouring to place the luggage on the car, and our enemy, the coachman, who was angryly displacing it, and, with a shower of German oaths, endeavouring to push it down again, positively refusing to take any of it at all; but, notwithstanding our united and urgent persuasions, we were ignobly defeated, and the result was, that our willing porter had to go off again in the pouring rain into the heart of the town, on another voyage of discovery, for a second cab, which he ultimately found, and brought to our rescue. The two were at once pressed into service, one carrying our luggage, the other containing ourselves. We then made our grand entry, in procession, through the Potsdam Gate, into Berlin, and took up our head quarters at the Hotel de Russie, which ultimately turned out to be exceedingly comfortable. Next morning, after breakfast, our business was to explore the city, and our hotel being within a few yards of that unrivalled street, the Unter den Linden, and at the east

end of it, in the midst of the public buildings, we were in a good position for commencing our examination.

CHAP. VI.

The first building that presented itself was the Arsenal, which is a magnificent Grecian structure, decorated with carvings in stone, representing trophies of armour and other war-like effigies.

Next to it stands the Guard House, the University and Academy of Fine Arts, opposite which are the Prince of Prussia's Palace, the Royal Library, the Opera House, and the late King's private residence. All these are fine buildings, and clustered together within a length of six hundred yards on each side of the noble Linden Strasse, which is nearly a mile long, and of great width, two rows of lime trees forming a wide avenue in the centre, which still leaves a spacious street on each side for vehicles, and unusually broad parapets for foot passengers. At the west end stands the great Brandenburg Gate, designed after an

Athenian model. It is a noble pile, crowned by a car of victory with four horses, similar in composition to those at St. Marco in Venice and the Place Carrousel in Paris. In the middle of this street stands Rauch's elaborate and effective equestrian statue of Frederic the Great, with its triple pedestal covered with rich bas-relief, and the crowd of life-size supporting figures upon the base, whose proportions to that of the King himself are those of dwarfs to a giant. Four of these at the angles are equestrian portraits of his most celebrated generals.

Near to the Guard House are placed marble statues of the two well-known Prussian generals, Bulow and Scharnhorst, and one of the great Blücher, in bronze, faces them from the opposite side of the street. There are beside these, in various parts of the town, many other monuments in memory of their fallen heroes.

We next crossed the Spree by the bridge *Schlossbrücke*, on our way to the palace, at one of the gates of which stand the two colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, with their rampant horses, copies from Rome, which by this time had become old acquaintances of ours,

as we met the originals first at their own home in the Monte Cavello; again we saw other copies at the entrance to the King's Palace at Naples, which were members of the same family as the pair of which we are now speaking, all of them having been presented to their present owners by the late Emperor Nicholas. On reaching the palace we were struck by its size and imposing position; the design is effective, and derives great beauty from a dome of considerable height, which surmounts it. Our admiration, however, was in some degree changed to regret on finding that the decoration, and, indeed, the whole was only brick and plaster, which in some parts already gave evidence of decay; but we afterwards found that many of the private houses in the town were built in a similar way. Berlin stands on a dreary plain of sandy soil, in the midst of a barren country, watered by the sluggish river Spree, which empties itself into the Havel, a little below Charlottenberg, and is navigable for large (and unshapely looking) barges. The appearance of the river is anything but pleasant, and we should think can scarcely be wholesome. Indeed, sanitary measures meet with unusual difficulties here,

for owing to the level state of the country the river has not current sufficient to carry off the drainage of the town, which is itself perfectly flat, and of great extent, some of the streets being two miles long in a straight line, with only a few inches of inclination from one end to the other, and very little elevated above the surface of the river at their highest point. The drainage appears to be chiefly on the surface, and the width of the channels is unusually great, probably with the intention of rapidly relieving the streets from heavy falls of rain, which would otherwise remain spread over them.

This appears to be a great city, but, as the houses are generally low, many not more than two storeys high, and occupying a large area of land, the accommodation for inhabitants does not accord with the apparent size of the town. We find that it contains nearly four hundred thousand inhabitants upon an area of six thousand seven hundred acres, being at the rate of sixty persons to an acre; whereas Vienna, its neighbouring capital, accommodates one hundred and thirty six people upon the same space, whilst our own metropolis has three hundred and twenty! It is, however, a compara-

tively modern town, and being laid out in wide streets, with considerable regularity, may sufficiently account for this discrepancy. We have seen few towns in Europe evidencing such taste in the architecture of their public buildings. The great number of them clustered around one end of the Unter den Linden form, when viewed from near the Prince of Prussia's Palace, a magnificent *coup d'œil.*

In completing our arrangements for continuing the journey, we found, as usual, that it was necessary to have money, to obtain which we went to the Bank, an extensive house and doing a large business in an economical way, which may probably suggest something to our bankers, as the exchange of our English circular notes into Prussian thalers involved a little arithmetic. The process was carried on before our eyes with a piece of chalk upon the rough oak counter. This we found to be a general practice at other banks in some parts of the Continent.

Another very important piece of business was to get the passport *en règle,* which was effected by the usual process, and we were now ready to start further northwards.

Next morning we commenced by rail another stage of our journey, passing through Stettin, which is a seaport on the Baltic, of considerable importance, situated at the mouth of the Oder, and is the principal shipping place for Berlin; we here began to find that we were getting nearer the North Pole, for, although it was only the fourth of September, the ladies at the station were enveloped from head to foot in heavy woollen cloaks, with which we should also have been happy to have been provided ourselves.

After leaving the station we crossed the Oder upon a long timber viaduct, which extends over a marsh for a great distance, and is a rough fragile affair, by no means suited to our English notions of stability; however, it carried us safely over, and is evidently an exception to the general method of constructing railways on the Continent, which we have always found to be good, and well managed. In this instance our train happened to be an exceedingly long one, in consequence of a large number of carriages being occupied by soldiers and officers, who were following the King of Prussia; it seems to have been our fortune to follow in the footsteps of royalty,

for, in coming through Holland, the King had, as in this case, only preceded us by one day. At every station on the line there were great displays of decorations, and from what we could gather, the King of Prussia appears to be decidedly popular. On this occasion he was on a tour of inspection over his troops, who, of course, in consequence, were in great activity in this part of his Majesty's dominions; indeed, for the last few days, it had been to us like living in a camp, for half the population of Berlin seemed to be military, and, however much it was an evidence of imperative government, added greatly to the gaiety of the town.

When we arrived at Bromberg, where we intended to rest until morning, it was cold, dark and late at night. Here again we were without cabs, and had the same difficulty as at Berlin in procuring one. Our drive into the town appeared long and dreary to us, as there were no lights of any description for a considerable distance; indeed, we were preparing ourselves to rough it in a dismal place for this night at least. The few miserable little oil lamps, which we at last came to in passing through the centre of the town, scarcely

served the purpose of rendering darkness visible. It is worthy of remark that these (such as they were) swung in the usual continental fashion, being suspended from the centre of a cord stretched across the street, one end of which was fast to the building at one side, whilst the other passed over a pulley on the opposite side, and served to lower and raise the lamp at the time for lighting, which is generally done by women.

On continuing our way to the hotel, we passed through the market, which, although crowded with people, did not succeed in raising our opinion of the place, or prevent us wishing that we had continued our journey to Königsberg, even although it would have occupied the whole night. When we reached our hotel, which was in a very dark corner of a very dark street, we were rejoiced to find that we had done better by coming to it, as the comfort of the interior repaid us for our temporary sufferings, part of which was a severe cold I had caught in coming through the comfortless dreary country between here and Berlin, a great portion of which is nothing better than a barren sandy heath, and the severity of the

climate having surprised us before we were sufficiently protected by warmer clothing.

We supped well, went to a good bed under an eider down quilt, and by means of a good night's rest lost a portion of my cold, and found an appetite for an excellent breakfast, which was ready punctually at the time we had ordered it; and we would here point a moral for the benefit of all future travellers. "Never be wholly discouraged by first appearances." We did not start from this hotel, for we were started, yes, absolutely sent away, so eager was every one to do his duty that before we could ask for the horses they were in, before we looked for our luggage it was on the coach, and before we well knew that we were ready we were rattling away through the streets to catch the train, which our energetic landlord had determined we should not miss, and, I should think we had at least three quarters of an hour to wait in the cold station, giving us ample time to admire its architecture, which was good, and to reflect upon what we saw in our chase from the hotel.

Bromberg is an old Polish town, prettily situated on the banks of a small river and a large canal, of its own name, which commu-

nicates with the Vistula, and having now sufficiently admired both the town and its inhabitants, we find that the three quarters of an hour have gone, and the train has come.

CHAP. VII.

We again joined the army, for on entering the railway carriage we found the prevailing military tinge in our companions, following their King, who had preceded them to a military station some miles further on. On our arrival at Dirschau, which is on the Vistula, sixteen miles above Danzic, we had to change the smooth running of the railway, in consequence of its unfinished state, for twelve miles jolting of a diligence, which carried us across a bridge of boats over the Vistula, at this place a considerable river, and has a great trade in bringing down the corn and timber from Poland to Danzic. We then drove over a long and flat, but fertile marsh, defended by embankments from the rivers, which are in many places above its level. Before reaching Marienburg we crossed the other arm of the Vistula, called the Nogath, on another bridge of boats. At

Marienburg we again joined the railway. After passing a fine old Gothic castle of brick, which had once sheltered the warlike knights of the powerful Teutonic Order, but has now descended to become a peaceful military store. The remainder of our journey to Königsberg was through a country which appeared to be in a better state of cultivation and more thickly populated than that through which we had just passed.

On arriving at Königsberg the usual scarcity of cabs was rendered worse by a total absence of porters; but, after a struggle, we succeeded in reaching an hotel, the Deutsches Haus, an immense new building, with plenty of comfortable rooms, but a woful scarcity of attendants.

Königsberg is a place of considerable importance, upon the river Pregel, which is navigable for vessels of light draft. It is from here that the principal supply of amber is obtained, and it is historically celebrated as the town in which Frederick the First placed the crown upon his own head, in the year seventeen hundred and one, and the asylum to which fled the late King and Queen of Prussia, when driven from their capital by Napoleon, after the battle of Jena.

We knew that at this place the railway would fail us as a means of transit towards Russia, but we expected, at least, to obtain all the necessary information as to the best means of proceeding on the remainder of our journey when we arrived here; however, we were much disappointed to find that we could have got quite as much at home, indeed, no one appeared to know anything more about Russia than that there *did* exist such a country, and that its Emperor was about to be crowned. We could, however, have got as far as Tilsit, which is near the Russian frontier, by *Schnell Post*, a conveyance running between the two towns daily, carrying the mails: if, however, we had availed ourselves of this, we should have been left without any means of proceeding further. Under these adverse circumstances we determined to consult the British Consul, who was a German banker in the town, and kindly took considerable pains to supply us with all the information in his power, and furnish us with Russian money. He told us there was but one way of getting to St. Petersburg, that was by the *Telega*, which did not prove to be desirable, as we found it to be a small uncovered waggon,

without springs, changing at every post, horses, vehicle, luggage and passengers: this operation repeated fifty times in six hundred miles would have been intolerable, to say nothing of the jolting to be expected from such an inflexible vehicle. We therefore determined to purchase a carriage of our own and travel with post horses, which we knew could be obtained on the road. This determination was not made without considerable courage on my part, as the representation of those who happened to know anything of the route were exceedingly discouraging. The roads were said to be fearfully bad, and the Russians random unscrupulous drivers. The country through which we should have to pass was held up as a dreary wilderness, through which few think of travelling; notwithstanding all our well founded terror at this prospect we decided to risk it rather than take the other.

We immediately commenced a chase in search of coach builders, and having found one, we endeavoured to impress upon him our ideas of the qualifications necessary in a carriage, whose responsibility would be so heavy. She must be strong, well built, and roomy; to our

great delight he replied that he had one to suit us exactly, and brought out an overgrown perambulator, which would not do at all, and was dismissed at once along with its master, to be succeeded by another which we found in a cowhouse, that would not do either, in short we went to most, if not all of the coach builders in Königsberg, and out of their collection could find only two which approached our ideas of perfection: these were sent to our hotel, in order that we might study them at our leisure. For this purpose they were placed in the public street, immediately under our windows. In that position they were inspected by the landlord, the waiters, the shopkeepers, and we should think by at least half of his Prussian Majesty's subjects in the place, each kindly volunteering his opinion on their respective merits. The landlord, in whom we had considerable confidence, seemed to consider that the acme of perfection was a nice well-padded interior; we, on the other hand, looked for strong springs and good wheels, combined with lightness and strength, which qualities we found partially developed in the one nearest the door. Their two owners were next summoned to re-

ceive the decision arrived at. The scene which ensued between these two German gentlemen was one of considerable amusement, as their chief conversation consisted of interwoven recommendations of their respective vehicles, with total condemnation of the other's. It was, however, neither our desire nor intention to use both; we therefore, after thanking the owner of the rejected one, commenced to treat with the other, which was a matter of considerable difficulty, in consequence of his remaining sole possessor of the field; however, the bargain was at last struck, and the carriage became ours. We next directed our attention to repairing its deficiencies; the first step was to ascertain what they were, which was no easy matter, as there were so many points to consider.

The carriage consisted of four wheels of ordinary height, on iron axles, and suspended between them from large C springs hung the body, with a rumble behind for luggage, and a driving box in front, below which was fixed a bar stretching horizontally across the vehicle, and arranged for the attachment of two horses abreast, which were sufficient in Prussia; but as

we were informed that the Ruskies drove four abreast, we found it absolutely necessary to provide for that number by lashing, with ropes, a longer bar upon the top of the original one, with a swing tree at each end for the additional horses. Underneath the bar was fixed the pole, which, to prepare for the Russian roads, had to be strengthened by elaborate lashings. Similar precaution had to be applied to the springs, which were enveloped in thick cord, and to the centre of each a double rope, nearly an inch thick, was fastened, and passed under the body of the carriage to the other, and firmly attached there; after being drawn tight, this was intended to relieve the sudden strains that might arise from the jolting on the rough roads. The colour of the carriage was a dark brown, which contrasted rather disadvantageously with that of our new ropes. In fact, it looked not at all a promising vehicle, having all the appearance of an accumulation of compound fractures.

The interior anatomy was scarcely less remarkable, as it was rather a spacious affair. It was well padded and covered with dark blue cloth, trimmed with drab; the usual doors at

each side had unusual pockets, which might have held a fair quantity of provisions, if we had had the presence of mind to put some in. Our days were to be provided for by reading books and admiring the scenery, the front seat being for this purpose fitted up as a library.

Our nights were to be spent comfortably stretched along an amateur hammock invented for the purpose, and consisting of a strong slip of canvass, nailed to the front edge of the seat upon which I sat, and attached to the front edge of the opposite one by leathern loops and two nails; (during the day time, however, it hung down in front of my seat;) upon this, in the evening, one of the cushions from the front seat was placed, and converted the open space into a part of a couch, upon which I could recline at night. This was considered to be a most efficient substitute for a bed, and as it was only to be for four nights, I did not mind it much.

The windows of our domicile were, as usual, in the doors, the front, and a little one at the back, commanding an extensive prospect of the luggage, which was tied on behind. All these windows were especially subjects of con-

gratulation to us, as when travelling over new ground one likes to look out as much as possible. Having obtained peaceable possession, our next business was to see that it was put into proper condition for commencing and enduring its labours.

To this end an intelligent young man was engaged as *commissionaire,* to hunt up all the authorities on the ailments incident to coach bodies, and a council of four was at last organized, the result of whose deliberation was that the wheels wanted repair, that the springs were bad, that the body was not firm enough, and that there was not a sound bolt in the whole affair. Well! there was nothing but to make the best of it; and at it they went as soon as the word of command was given—ding-dong, hammer and tongs—smiths with irons, joiners with wood, and sadlers with leather, until such a commotion had been raised as to bring the population of Königsberg down to our hotel door in consternation, to escape which we went away to make some purchases, it being my intention to procure a large eider down pillow, as part of the furniture for our errant establishment, but, after visiting several shops, could

not succeed in obtaining one that pleased me: At the last, however, I was told that they would make one in two days, and they brought their own pillow down stairs as a sample. If I had ordered the pillow, it would have been ready by the time we were half way to Riga, and of course not available. I, therefore, at once made an offer for the pattern, which was accepted. I marched off with my trophy, and have got it yet. At the same time I purchased some grey calico, in order to make a cover for it, thinking that as I should have a good deal of time on my hands I might take some work with me. This was carefully put into the pocket on my door, in company with needles and thread. On returning to the scene of action, we found the engagement as fierce as ever, in fact rather worse, for our *Maggior domo* had mounted on the roof of the carriage, the better to direct operations. There we left him at about eleven o'clock at night, and there we found him in the morning at five, having, so far as we could then discover, not even changed his position; but our humanity was satisfied on discovering that he had had a little sleep in a parenthesis during the night.

By this time the repairs of the carriage were nearly completed, and he was occupied in disposing of our multifarious packages. The result of his scheming was that the two largest were deposited, stratum super stratum, upon the rumble, and firmly secured by ropes and an iron chain, intended to resist the knives of predatory Cossacks, whose attentions we were led to expect in the dark nights through the forests.

One box was fixed on the top of the carriage, and a smaller one, containing what we proposed to use on the journey, was put under the front seat along with about forty yards of rope, which was intended as a comfort for the vehicle in times of distress.

After being particularly careful to ascertain if anything else was required, and arriving at a firm conviction that all was complete, we were recalled to a consciousness of the imperfect nature of human calculations by finding that we wanted "*Schmiere,*" (grease for the wheels,) which was one of the most important adjuncts to a carriage of this description, in consequence of the primitive construction of the axles and wheels; the contrivance so well known in

England as an axle box to hold grease, is here a myth, all their wheels being put on in the same way as our common carts at home, and with such rapid travelling and rough usage as we had been led to expect, would require greasing at every few posts. To hold this necessary lubricant we had to get a tin can made of sufficient capacity to hold enough for the journey, which required about twelve pounds. Now this, at fifteen pence a pound, made one hundred and eighty pence worth in the receptacle, half of which was intended to be used and the other half to be stolen: we had learnt that it was necessary to prepare in this way owing to the customs of the country.

Having now completed our preparations—locked up the ends of the chain and pocketed the keys—we entered the Speisezimmer, to partake of breakfast before starting.

Some one had evidently been up before us, for we found in the dining-room a gentleman and lady walking about; the latter was commencing the duties of the day by a burnt offering; she was indulging in a manner common to Russian ladies, but as I did not discover that she was of that nation until

afterwards, I was at the moment a little surprised to see her smoking a cheroot. The gentleman was her husband, and a Russian general. After making our adieus at the hotel, we were sent away, and a most important ceremony the parting was. First, the operations of a dozen helping hands, who all found something to do, with the shouting of more than a dozen shouting mouths, who all had something to shout. Then the difficulty of settling ourselves for the first time in a new seat, then the more serious difficulty of satisfying the demands of all the dozen helping hands, who had done something of which we never knew—then the clatter of hoofs, a smacking of whips, shouts, adieus—a creak!—and a sudden move!—and off we went to Russia.

CHAP. VIII.

The road from this place to Tilsit, a distance of eighty miles, is a splendid Macadamized causeway, of considerable width, along which we flew at a desperate pace, and in an hour and a half arrived at Pogauen, the first post at which we changed horses. We were so far pleased with our vehicle, and had made up our minds that going to St. Petersburg was to be an agreeable undertaking. The first incident that occurred to vary the monotony of easy travelling was a sudden perception of a commotion amongst our luggage behind. The stern window was opened, and the captain looked out, when, to his great indignation, he perceived that there was a man on the top of it, evidently keeping himself there with difficulty. As we thought the horses had quite enough to

do, he was ordered down, and, after some demur, down he went, but was up again in a fresh place immediately afterwards; this time his presence was worse than before, for he climbed the step at the side, and by poking his head and shoulders through the carriage window, made us aware the moment he spoke that he had been drinking *schnaps*. The chief purport of his discourse was a repetition of apologies, relieved by interspersed requests for permission to remain, as he had a long distance to go, and one of the persuasive arguments which he used was that "he was not a common sort of man, as we might see by the quality of his dress." This, however, did not prevent my husband expressing his disgust at the proximity of such an offensive neighbour; and at last we were compelled to grant him permission to ride with his old companion the luggage, in order to get rid of him. During the remainder of our journey to Tilsit our attention was directed chiefly to the condition of the axles, which, from intense exercise, became very thirsty.

To satisfy them, it was necessary to take the wheels off, and to effect this a peculiar sort of lever is applied, something on the same principle

as one which is so common in the stable-yards at home, only its construction is not nearly so simple. It consists of a tripod with a long lever, having the fulcrum near the short end, the longer end remaining on the ground, whilst the short one is lifted by another lever. A want of true mechanical principle, which was evident even to me.

On arriving at Tilsit, our attention was occupied by imagining first what our reception would be, and then by criticising it when we got to our quarters.

The Hotel de Russie is only a middling place, having deal floors, and the furniture of deal too, but clean enough to make it tolerable.

The meat was poor, the bread sour, and served by a waiter who had both these qualities, with an abundance of beard and moustache, which was a novelty to us in a waiter.

As we were now within a few miles of the Russian frontier, we naturally supposed that we were within reach of full information as to the state of the roads, and the accommodation to be expected for the rest of our journey, but what we obtained was neither abundant nor agreeable, as we were informed that the roads

were bad, or rather that there were none at all, but that there was one direction across the country, which was the shortest way to St. Petersburg, passing through a few miserable villages, inhabited by Polish Jews, from whom nothing in the shape of provision could be expected, and at other places through large forests, inhabited by wolves and Cossacks, who would take all they could get. We were advised, therefore, to take as much with us as we should require; but this warning was considered by us to be rather due to their exalted notions of our necessities, and, trusting much to our own ability to make the best of circumstances, we neglected it. We went to bed, and dreamt of savage Cossacks in the forests of Russia popping themselves in at our carriage windows, and politely asking if they might take the luggage away from behind.

In the morning we began to wonder where we were, as, tossing about in a post carriage for eleven hours, after the smooth railway travelling we had had was apt to create a little confusion in one's brain; but we were soon recalled to consciousness by seeing the contrast between the rooms we were in and the one we had lately

left. We sounded an alarm, and were visited by our evening's acquaintance, the bearded *Kellner*, who, in polite German, enquired what we would like for breakfast, with all the air of one who had the larder of the world at his command. We were very modest in our demands, merely asking for a simple dish which he was sorry they had not got. We, therefore, named another, and were equally unfortunate in our choice. The next was as bad, and the next; at last, wearied out with failure, we gave him carte blanche to bring us the first thing he could lay his hands on, which proved to be the supper we had rejected the night before. We then ordered the horses, got into our carriage at eight o'clock in the morning, and, after receiving a great deal of disagreeable advice from the landlord, with many well intended admonitions, very ungratefully received, we started from Tilsit, which has considerable hold on our memories, from the fact that it was at this place that Napoleon the First, of France, Frederick William the Third, of Prussia, and Alexander the First, of Russia, signed the treaty against England which resulted in such dissatisfaction to the two latter monarchs.

On crossing the River Memel (which is close to the town) by a bridge of boats, nearly a quarter of a mile long, our postillion pointed out the spot where the raft was moored upon which the three sovereigns met to execute the deed. The peculiarity of the position may probably have had its origin in a desire, as Paddy would say, to be on *neutral ground.*

After crossing, we drove along an ascending road, leaving below us a pleasant valley, through which flows the river, with the town on its opposite bank.

We were now in considerable uncertainty as to when we should arrive at the Russian frontier, as our information on this point had been hitherto so meagre. After pleasantly driving for an hour and a half on a good road, we arrived at what we expected to be the Russian boundary, a stone building of moderate size; but were soon undeceived by recognizing our old acquaintance, the Prussian eagle, over the door. Desirous as I was of proceeding on our journey, I was still glad to see his black face once again, for, from the uncertainty and bad reports of the Russians that we had received I must confess I trembled to face them.

We, however, only changed horses here, and after driving a short distance really did arrive at the much dreaded boundary. Here we were stopped by a pole across the road, painted with the stripes of the Russian flag, red, blue and white enrolled round it. It was not merely a gate across the way, but a bar between the nations, for at this point their differences are at once perceptible. Here some Russian officers came out of a hut. Advancing to our carriage window, our passport was demanded, and taken by them. During the time they detained us we were annoyed by being obliged to witness the amusement of several Prussian peasants, who were engaged in tormenting a poor toad, throwing it by the legs from one to the other. These people were, however, well dressed, clean and respectable looking, evidently a cheerful race. In about a quarter of an hour an escort of one random looking, well-mounted trooper, with his gun slung behind his back, and our passport in his pocket, was turned out from behind the hut, and as soon as he had placed himself beside our carriage, the bar was raised so that we might pass through. This was done in a manner somewhat remarkable to

English people accustomed to see the gate opened horizontally on hinges, as this was merely a lever, having its fulcrum in an iron joint on a post about five feet high, standing at one side of the road, the short end being loaded with a counterpoise sufficient to lift the long one, which forms the *barrier*, and stretches across to the other side of the road, where it is kept down to another post by means of a rope attached to the end of it. When this was raised, our postilion was politely told to drive on, and our escort, the soldier, was particularly attentive, as he never went more than two or three yards away from our window so long as we were under his charge, which was until he delivered us safely up within the gates of the Custom House at Tawroggen, a distance of about three English miles.

The road, or rather the place where the road should have been, was in an almost impassable state, and we frequently found it necessary to leave the track altogether and find a fresh one, which, in many cases, was only wide enough for our carriage, compelling our trooper, in his anxiety to keep guard over the door, to clear obstacles in a manner that would have done

credit to an English huntsman. This was our first taste of the difference between the nations! We had hitherto driven over a good macadamized road, smooth as a bowling green; the land for the most part well cultivated; the houses plentiful, well built, and apparently comfortable, their occupants prosperous and contented. But within half a yard of the bar which, like a knife edge, cuts off one nation from the other, the road ceased, the land became uncared for and barren, the houses changed to a few scattered hovels, and the people were miserable, broken spirited, and in rags.

CHAP. IX.

We are now locked within the precincts of the Custom House, preparing our minds to undergo an examination in Russ with great trepidation, in consequence of our ignorance thereof, when, to our surprise, a gentlemanly looking young man stepped out, took off his hat, and politely bowing to us, said, in good English, "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Thomson," to which that gentleman, with his hat also in his hand, and bowing with equal grace, replied with an astonished affirmative, having forgotten their possession of the passport. The gentleman then made several inquiries with regard to the object of our visit, and after being satisfied with our replies, politely took leave of us and returned to his office. For a considerable time we awaited patiently the result of our examination, but at last wearied out, standing in the open yard, we held a con-

sultation, and it was resolved that as the gentleman whom we had seen was so gallant I should go in search of him, and inquire what was necessary to be done in order that we might get away. I therefore courageously entered the building, and wandered from one room to another, until at last I found him, and still addressing him in English, asked when or how we should get our passport and *Padaroshna*, the latter being a government certificate, authorizing us to hire post horses. After this inquiry I was astonished to see his blank looks, and the totally ungallant expression his countenance assumed. Soon perceiving the cause, however, I repeated my inquiries in German, which, evidently to his great delight, he understood. I was no less gratified to find that, although his English was exhausted, there was still a channel of communication opened, which enabled me to ascertain that we were not neglected, but that our papers were being prepared, and our luggage would be presently examined. Indeed, by the time I descended I found that my husband and the luggage had been attacked by half a dozen grey-coated serfs, intent upon searching both, and making pre-

parations by tearing down our portmanteaus and demanding the keys, each of which was subjected to the scrutiny of a liveried official, of whom there were two or three in waiting. Every box, every package, was ransacked, and the folly of trying to introduce literature in any form into Russia became disagreeably evident to us. Even the scraps of newspapers enveloping the most trifling articles of apparel were eagerly seized, and every morsel of paper, printed or not, put under the unrelenting arm of the official, who went off with it in evident delight. After this we had no hopes for our library on the front seat, and our consciences relented that we had not taken the warning of our landlord at Tilsit, for it ultimately turned out that our books were all confiscated, even a used up Bradshaw, which would in its prime have been of very little use in Russia. Our indignation was in some measure allayed by a promise that they should be sent after us to Riga for examination by the censor, and, if found inoffensive, would be restored to us there if we paid the carriage now. In order to ascertain the amount, they were weighed, and although the books were not very heavy, the

charge was high, indeed it was more than they were worth; and when I informed the officer of the fact he could not alter the law, which put the books all on an equality, seeming to value Bradshaw as much as Milton's Paradise Lost, at so much a hundred weight. In the end, however, we had no other resource than to pay the demand, notwithstanding considerable doubts in our own minds as to whether we should ever see our books again. During the time all this negotiation was going on, our boxes were undergoing an examination, which had been conducted with very little care or regard to order. The process was this: each article was taken up, mercilessly shaken, and thrown down upon the pavement, until the whole of the property lay in a confused heap in the yard. As soon as they had satisfied themselves that our boots, stockings, and other articles did not contain anything treasonable or contraband, the whole confused heap was thrust into the boxes, without any regard to the decorum of my dress, boots, bonnets, stockings, and collars, all indiscriminately mixed together, and the lids crushed down upon them, any want of accurate adjustment of quantity and

space being remedied by the pressure of an officer's knee. The *dvornits* were then ordered to place the portmanteaus on the carriage, which appeared a great task; however, they managed it, after a hard struggle and a deal of "Russ," which we fortunately did not understand, the chains and ropes were fastened as before, and after again waiting for a considerable time, another officer made his appearance, to give us the startling intelligence that our passport was of no use, and we could not travel with it in Russia, even though it had been properly vised by the Russian Minister.* This, of course, alarmed us considerably, but our fears were allayed on hearing that he had made a note upon it which would enable us to obtain a padaroshna, authorising us to travel with post horses as far as Riga, when we should have to remain in durance vile until we had procured a Russian passport. After two hours' torment here, we still had to remunerate our

* Foreigners in Russia are not supposed to travel under their own flag, as in other European countries, but are taken under the protection of the Russian government, which grants passes enabling the possessor to travel from place to place, and *cartes-de-séjour*, without which no one can remain in the country.

tormentors before they unlocked the gates and allowed us to proceed. The next step was to obtain the *padaroshna,* and we were conducted by an officer about two hundred yards to the post house, which is also an hotel in a small way, its outside appearance being something better than a barn, but not so good as a warehouse. In this place we waited for an hour and a half. At the end of that time the important document was brought to us, and cost a considerable sum, as it is by this means that the traveller in Russia is made to pay the tax of the post horses, instead of the owner, as in England. The number of horses authorised to be hired is named in it, and upon this number the tax is levied. The postmaster can, however, on his own responsibility, furnish as many more as he chooses, but in this case he charges a proportionately increased sum for each extra horse, as he has himself to pay the tax upon these. To collect this a government inspector, called *isprovnik,* is stationed at each post house.

CHAP. X.

During our short stay in the hotel we endeavoured to obtain something to satisfy our hunger, we were delighted to hear of roast fowl, of which they had plenty cooked. When it did come, it was of such a curious dark colour that we were compelled to make considerable allowances in our own minds for the variations of climate and its ornithological effects before we could make up our minds to taste it; when we did so, it turned out to be as remarkable in flavour as in appearance, and at last our curiosity was excited so far as to induce us to ask what we had been eating, and to our disgust found that the roast fowls were only dead rooks. These birds, (of which we had already seen many in the north of Germany, and afterwards in Russia), although partaking of the same characteristics as the rooks of England, are not all black, assimilating more to a grey crow, which is sometimes seen

in the north of Scotland, and called there "hoody crow." The head, breast and tail are black, whilst all the rest of the bird is grey. This however was no inducement for us to finish the ones before us, and notwithstanding the state of our appetites, we were compelled to postpone the feast until our motive became a little stronger; for that purpose we carefully enclosed the objectionable morsels in paper and carried them into the carriage as a dernier resource in case of absolute extremity; not being exactly satisfied however, we enquired if they had anything else in the house, upon which they replied that they had some *ogurtzi*, which, when produced, turned out to be one of the greatest of Russian delicacies, cucumbers boiled in salt and water, and as yellow as saffron; we did not eat that either, and all we got was some brown bread. Up to this stage on our journey the bread had gradually been getting worse, and having here reached a point of badness beyond which it would not do to go, we reasoned ourselves into the necessity of laying in a stock to prevent the possibility of absolute starvation, until we reached Riga; part of a small loaf was therefore appropriated and placed in company with the crows. We could get nothing to drink

but water at this place, and that was alive. The animals in it were no longer animalculæ, and far beyond requiring the assistance of a microscope to become prominent characters; we, therefore, did not attempt to take any of this with us, although we met with none better until we tasted the waters of the Neva.

During this uncheerful period, when we were beginning to see the dreadful amount of resignation that would be required, our poor carriage was undergoing an operation. The hard work and ill usage upon the bad road from the Russian frontier (although only three miles long) having been sufficient, indeed more than sufficient, to overpower one of the bolts in our vehicle, which yielded to the force of circumstances, and—snapped! this was a terror! the first three miles out of a journey of six hundred, and damaged already—equal damage for every three would leave us no carriage at all in the end; however, we did not despair, but took the next best course to having a perfect carriage—got this one repaired, and in order to do so a blacksmith was wanted, who of course had to be sent for, and there was nobody to go for him who knew his whereabouts but a lame beggar, and

a very willing and grateful beggar he was; first he fetched the blacksmith and showed him what was wanted, and when the smith had retired apparently for good, leaving us in despair, he again returned to the charge, hunted up the son of Vulcan, and brought him this time to a permanent stand, until the bolt was restored to its original strength, and our minds to some degree of peace.

After all this delay, preparations were at last made for a start, by the advent of six shaggy horses, sturdy little fellows who had been innocent of a curry comb from their birth, and were clothed with all the hair that nature had ever given them; their driver was the same with the addition of a few dirty rags. The additional splinter bar, of which we made mention at Koenigsberg, was now brought into use, as the horses were attached to it four abreast, by pieces of old rope; by the time they were in, we began to calculate upon our chances of a safe journey, and found we had but unpromising materials to deal with, first there were our rough uncultivated cattle, then our still rougher and still more uncultivated driver, then our poor carriage, which, in consequence of its

recent fracture, was a source of anxiety to us, and to crown all, the heavy black clouds of a coming thunder storm were sweeping over our heads. All this, with the prospect of a journey of a hundred and fifty miles to Riga without a stoppage, was at least unpromising, and we may be pardoned for feeling a little discouraged when the rain began to pour out of a dense black sky, the lightning flashing, the thunder rolling, and our horses starting here and there without anything to control them. Our poor driver was certainly on the box, but as he had twelve reins to manage, upon the ends of which he sat, and the reins themselves were mere cords, he could not be expected to have much power over six horses, whose heads were not coupled together, and indeed each animal was entirely at liberty to move in any direction it pleased, and did it.

A poor, miserable, disheartened looking wretch he was; and it did not add to our comfort when we found ourselves drawing an involuntary comparison between him and our late Prussian postillions, who were neat, brisk looking fellows, with clean bright livery, top boots, and nice little horns slung over their

shoulders, upon which they played cheerily in approaching the villages. But what was still more dispiriting, we missed the bright smile of comparative freedom, that spoke a light heart and prosperity. Notwithstanding all this we started, and the road, for the first mile, was better than we expected, which brightened our prospects a little, but only for a moment. We were soon damped by a sudden plunge into a track, more like the bottom of a clay ditch than a carriage road, but even the worst clay ditch would have been comparatively easy to what we met with immediately after this. As it was, however, we soon found ourselves stuck up to the axles in it, and the horses floundering up to their bellies in the bog. This, however, was apparently an ordinary occurrence, as we afterwards discovered that the drivers were provided with a ready expedient for extricating any unfortunate in that position. As we had now just entered a wild pine forest, there were plenty of small trees, many of which had been cut down and left lying about; it was usual, therefore, to pick up one of them, use it as a lever, and prise both carriage and horses bodily out of their dilemma. As this boggy road

extended the whole way through the forest to the next post, a length of twenty-two versts,* the Russians had endeavoured to improve it by constructing what the Americans call a corduroy road, which is nothing more than a series of round clumsy trunks of trees, laid side by side across the track, without any other preparation than their roots and branches being lopped off. The trees were not held together in any way, there was no filling up between them, no longitudinal bearers of any kind; nothing, in fact, beyond the bare trunks, laid like the steps of a ladder, many weary miles long. Where there was a brook to be crossed, the banks were piled up with the same round trunks, still laid across the direction of the road, and, of course, parallel to the stream. When these were piled high enough, a few long trees were thrown across the brook, from one side to the other, and the steps of the ladder continued across the whole, so that all the bridges presented the same appearance as the main road. Now, as these streams were in every case running in a little valley of their own, which cut across our path like a deep

* The verst is two thirds of an English mile in length.

chasm, the road was made to descend rapidly down to the level of the bridge, still of the same construction; and now, if you can imagine the sort of driving that we had over such a country. The six random horses, driven with all the fury of a carnival over this eternal rack. The tearing rattle of a boulder road at home would have been absolute peace to it. Thumping is too mild a word for it. Time is required between one thump and another, but here we had for hours an unremitting series of shocks constant and unmerciful. We sat in terror for the first few miles, looking at each other with that anxious, uncertain look that people might have who expected an earthquake, our feet set against the opposite side, and our hands clutching the seats, everything loose in the carriage tossing about in confusion, and the vehicle itself crashing and straining until we expected every moment to feel it smash into fragments, and find ourselves prostrate on the road. Horrible as this was, there was still worse danger in the occasional plunge into the soft mud again, when the corduroy ceased, it appeared as though the whole affair, carriage and horses, had been dropped suddenly off a

shelf of two or three feet high; then, by the time we had become half reconciled to this new motion, the rolling and plunging of the carriage into the deep soft holes, and the unequal tearing of the horses to get us out, we were awakened to new terrors by a sudden shock against the first trunk of the next length of timber road. It was the custom of our drivers to rush into the two extremes of speed, either creeping at a walk or galloping furiously; and to render it still more tormenting, the slow motion was always on the good road, and the quick over the bad; indeed, the worse the road and the more impetus they seemed to require to get over it. No English driver would have dared to descend the incline before crossing a bridge, as these men did, even though he were only driving a well trained pair in a light carriage, but with six scattering animals and a heavy vehicle, it was frightful. Rushing down one side to gain power for ascending the other, the sudden spring of the bridge when we got on it, and the want of any protection at the sides, made us positively tremble. The ends of the trees are left standing out in irregular teeth, like a huge chevaux de frise.

In one part we passed a number of men busy doing something at the road, we cannot say what, for there was no evidence of improvement, and with our state of feeling it may well be supposed that we were in no good humour to receive the application which they made for *chaussée-geld* or toll. As this was the first place at which the demand had been made in Russia, and the language strange to us, we had only our previous experience in Germany of such requests to guide us in a reply, which we made in the shape of a rouble* that however was rejected with evident signs of discontent; determined this time to be on the right side, we increased our offer to an improbable amount, which was carried by the grey-coated officer into a little hut by the roadside, and the change was faithfully returned to us, after retaining as much as freed us on to Riga. We should have complained at home to pay even the small sum usually exacted at a toll-gate, if the road had been bad, but here, where there was no road in many parts, and the bits there were of such a description, we did wonder

* A rouble is worth three shillings and fourpence.

what the roubles were charged for, and after all the grey-coated fellow wanted to keep the balance for himself. We had been watching the workmen during this time with feelings of commiseration, for they were such poor miserable looking creatures, some of them scarcely half clothed.

CHAP. XI.

After a drive of two hours and a-half, we reached *Neskutschnoje*, the first post-house, which turned out to be a tolerably fair sample of the others on the remainder of the road. It was a decent looking whitewashed building of one storey high, standing a few yards back from the road. The principal room was entered at once from the front door, and out of this a door led to a second room. These are the two places open to the public, both being magnificently furnished with one deal table and no chairs, a substitute being provided by wooden benches fixed round the walls. In most of the post houses these had the luxury of a leather covering and half an inch of dust, which in some measure served to conceal the bare wood which showed through the holes in the leather, this

was stitched tightly over the timber without any stuffing, and formed the only resting place for weary travellers. In the first room at the head of the table sat the post master, in an uniform of blue cloth and yellow buttons, ready to receive the padaroshna, which he demanded on our entering the apartment. After examining it he copied the contents into a large book kept for the purpose. This being done, he returned the paper, and issued his orders to supply us with the number of horses named in it; for these we paid at the rate of three halfpence per horse per mile. During the time we went through this process the driver had been busy untying his ropes and taking out the horses, after which he went away and stood at a distance with them; we were surprised at this, as we naturally expected him to return and demand his pay. We had been already sufficiently struck with the contrast between our brilliant postboys of Prussia and this poor fellow, but when we saw him standing there cowering and diffident, it was still more forcibly impressed upon us.

The poor lad kept at more than a respectful distance, with his cap off and head hung down, his scanty rags all wet through with

the pouring rain, and his whole appearance pitiable.

He came when he was called, but still humble and diffident, and when the money was offered to him took it with trepidation, without even looking at the amount, hastily putting it into his cap, and after kissing the hand which gave it, hurried off, apparently glad to get away. It may not be an evidence of less civilization to see profound respect from people of his station towards their employers, but it did excite our commiseration to think of the probable oppression that had ground down the spirit of these people to such abject servility as we began to perceive. How different from the Italian postillions, who are never satisfied, give them as much as you please, they still demand "*buona mano*."

There is one peculiarity in the post house we have not yet mentioned. On the table at which the post master ought to sit (he is oftener asleep on the floor), lies a book, attached to it by a sealed cord, so that it is impossible to move it without detection. In this book travellers may write any complaint they wish to make, in order that the govern-

ment inspector shall see it when he comes round, but a foreign voyageur will find it little to his advantage to adopt this course, as we afterwards found that the Russian officials of all grades would only move on silver wheels, which we were obliged to distribute pretty freely. After about half an hour's delay, we had six more shaggy horses, of the same build as before, tied to our carriage by another ragged *yamstchik* or driver, and, after once more taking our seats, we started off with a rattle for another shaking, which we got before reaching the next post. Our prospect was somewhat improved by fields of corn and rye taking the place of the forests. The crops were very scanty, and the land seemed poor. To get the horses over these rough roads, the drivers have to keep up a constant shouting and whipping, for which purpose they are provided with stentorian lungs and two whips, one long enough to reach the leaders, and the other short enough to be of service near at hand. After a plentiful use of both, we reached another post house, at which we went through the same process as before, with the addition of a threatening request from the *Stall-meister* to

have our wheels greased, but as we were of opinion that it was unnecessary, we declined, much to his chagrin, as the charge for this operation is his perquisite. We might probably have yielded to his importunities in consequence of our small experience, had it not been for a blind Polish beggar, whom we had already favoured with a few kopecks. The driver had previously shaken our wheels, and found them right, and dare not or could not speak; but, having whispered to the beggar, he told us in German (a language the Stall-meister did not understand), that it was not necessary. We therefore started unsmeared for the next post, at which place we really did require the operation, and it was done in due form, according to the established method, with the orthodox machine, which is the same as that already described. Night had now come on, and we were working in pitchy darkness, by the light of a little lantern. It was a comfortless start this time. The plunging of the carriage was as bad as before, and our fears for its safety were increased by the night coming on, and the necessity of greater caution. We agreed to keep watch by turns, to make sure

that our driver kept awake, for we had found him sleeping, as they all do, amongst the dirty straw of the stable yard, more like a dog than a human being. The thumping had already broken my combs; for, improbable as it may seem, the tossing was at times so great that I was lifted off my seat, and my head struck against the sides or roof of the carriage. We were always in alarm, our ears constantly open for any warning creak of the vehicle that might admonish us of coming dissolution, and at every post an anxious survey was made by my husband to find any trace of damage that might have befallen us. In this dreadful state of anxiety we travelled to the next post, meditating on what our fate might be before morning.

When we stopped, our first business was to present the padaroshna, and inquire for horses, and to our horror the answer was "*niet, niet.*" Here was a difficulty for people who knew no Russian; hitherto the postmaster had been able to speak German, but here he did not, and our horses having already been taken away, we were left standing in the dark with our poor helpless carriage, without the ability to ask either for the reason of our delay or its remedy, for when

I asked if any one there could speak German, the answer was still "*niet, niet.*" Tired of standing outside in this uncertainty, I entered the house, and found stretched upon the bench two Russian officers, and to my great joy discovered that one spoke German; deliverance dawned upon us at once, and he did all in his power to assist us and add to our comfort; they kindly offered us their places on the forms, and issued orders to the postmaster sufficient to save us any further trouble until we started again; it must be remarked here that all government officers or military men have absolute authority to demand attention on the road; on this occasion it stood in good service for us, as it appeared that we could have no horses until three o'clock in the morning, and it was now but eleven; there was, therefore, nothing better to be done than to trust to our guardians—follow their advice, and endeavour to obtain a little sleep. Seeing that I was exhausted they ordered some tea, which I found very refreshing, and served in glass tumblers. This is the only refreshment that can be procured at these places, except black—very black! bread, which is not refreshing, nay, scarcely eatable by human beings, for it consists

of rye, ground *en masse*, husks and all, with a strange admixture of sand and grit; this is the only food of the poor Russians, and they have nothing to it but the bad water of the country; there is nothing to our minds so like this abominable stuff as a piece of peat, which we are almost convinced would be quite as palatable; we could not touch it, and how they swallow it at all is a mystery. We now began to regret our contempt of the advice of the landlord at Tilsit, and turned with pleasure to the bits of brown bread which we had brought with such reluctance from Tawroggen in company with the poor crows; we, however, could not manage to eat them, and were obliged this time to leave them to their fate.

About an hour after we had finished our tea, during which the officers politely gave us their company, they left us, but not before giving all possible directions for our comfort, telling the post master to awake us at the right time, and have a cup of tea ready, all of which was carried out to the letter.

Our next trouble was where to bestow ourselves for the interval before four o'clock, at which time we were to start. This was soon

decided, as there turned out to be no alternative beyond the deal benches, with their ancient and dilapidated leather covers, upon which were already stretched some few unfortunate wayfarers. We picked out two places less dirty than the rest, and made the best of them by lying down as we were, with such substitutes for pillows and covering as our carriage rugs could make. It was a curious sleep that I had (for I did sleep even then) amongst a strange people, of whose language we knew nothing, and without a soul in the neighbourhood to whom we could have addressed a word that would have been understood, but still I had a good sleep, and awoke in perfect oblivion as to where I was or who the grey-coated ghost was that stood over me with a little dark lantern, the light from which had scarcely power enough to reach the square blank walls that boxed us in like a gloomy prison, and it was only when I was properly aroused and taking my tea that I was fully conscious that I had had my first sleep in Russia, and got a very severe stiff neck with it. The tea we were taking had been prepared for us at the request of our late military friends, by a poor woman who appeared to belong

to the place, and when at starting I gave her a few copper coins, she stooped down and taking up the hem of my garment, respectfully kissed it. It was very difficult to reconcile our feelings to this sort of attention at first, but before long we began to look upon the servility of the lower classes with indifference, and almost to expect it as a matter of right, for the repetition was frequent enough to make it a habit with us even in the short time of our stay, but never entirely obliterated the feeling of pity that it should be their custom.

Fortunately for us, the morning was fine, and the road was so much improved that we began to have high hopes of comfort, but they were presently brought down to zero when driving into a small town called *Shauel*. The post house stands in a large square at the entrance, surrounded by small one storied houses of decent appearance. On entering it, there was no one to be seen, and the place was like a rag shop hung round with garments, others lying on the seats, and at last on attacking the largest bundle it unrolled itself from off the couch, and became a postmaster, who was like the rest of the inhabitants of the town—a bearded

Jew. It seems as though there is an instinctive partiality in this race of people for old clothes. Before I had succeeded in awakening him, the dirt around me and the smell were so offensive that I was nearly overpowered, but we soon found that the remainder of the post stations were as bad, and had to take our measures in expectation of it.

On leaving the post house, we entered a narrow street, or rather the space between the houses, for it is not like any thoroughfare for traffic that has a name in England. The pavement consisted of huge masses of granite, at least three-quarters of a yard in diameter, flung down anywhere, without regard to level or position, the spaces between forming great holes, or rather pools, which were supplied by open drains out of the doorways on each side, each of which contributed a stream of refuse water black as ink. Into these puddles our carriage wheels dropped at every turn with a precipitous plunge, sending back splashes of the offensive mud into the houses from which it came. Both these channels and the pools were at least a foot deep in water; and although we walked carefully through, the concussions

were so great that we were in terror for our carriage at every fall.

The houses on each side were wretched hovels, built of either round timber or mud; the doors were left wide open, and the fullest opportunity afforded for inspecting their interiors—by no means an enticing sight. The favourite costume of the men appeared to be a long frock coat of a peculiar blue. They are all Polish Jews, who, being forbidden to reside in many Russian towns, are compelled to associate together.

CHAP. XII.

The road for the next two posts was impassable, and we were compelled to leave it entirely, getting across the fields as well as we could, by dint of hard language and still harder blows to our horses, who, although six in number, had enough to do sometimes to take us out of the holes.

At the end of the second post we came to another village, called *Janishki*, similar, in every respect, to the last. The houses, Jews, post-house, dirt and smell, all the same.

We smeared here, and during the time it was being done we went into a small church close by, where the people were worshipping; and as this was the first time we had entered a Russian place of worship we were astonished at one of the ceremonies of the Greek Church, which consists of an obeisance of a really grotesque character, as the person performing it

manages to bend so far over as to touch the ground with the crown of the head. This we afterwards saw done constantly in all places of worship, and before the images in the streets, by young and old, and even by the youngest children, accompanied by gestures similar to those used in the Romish Church.

From this place we had only four horses, as the road was a good macadamized *chaussée*, and we soon made our post, changed horses, and went on in good style to *Mittau*, where we were detained above two hours for horses. This is a town with fourteen thousand inhabitants, and is the capital of Courland, which forms one of the Governments of Russia. It may be worthy of remark that out of a population of five hundred and sixty-four thousand in this Government five hundred and forty-nine thousand adhere to the Lutheran religion. The houses here are all built of wood, but differ from those in the villages through which we passed, as the timber used is dressed, square, and framed, and painted with various colours, green and light brown prevailing.

We were very much surprised and delighted on preparing to start from the place to see a

decently dressed post-boy turn out to take charge of us. He was evidently ambitious of imitating the Prussian boys, of whom no doubt he had either heard or seen something, for he was decorated with a little horn, of the same sort as theirs. On leaving the town he made a good beginning, dashing away in capital style, across the *Treider Aa,* over a long bridge of boats, but as soon as he had left this public situation and entered a secluded pine forest, he slackened his speed, and betook himself calmly to practising music, an art which was evidently as new to him as it seemed difficult. No persuasion of ours could induce him to quicken his speed, as his undivided attention was given to his instrument, and perhaps some future traveller may find him developed into a talented postillion, and derive the benefit of *his* industry and *our* patience, for he certainly was the most stupid and provoking driver we had on the whole journey. We changed horses and parted with him at *St. Olai,* in the middle of the wood which continues the whole way to *Riga,* a distance of thirty-nine versts, a long ride with nothing but straight mast-like pines on each side. Before entering the gates we

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came to the *Dwina,* across which there is a raft, floating on the surface, from one side to the other, but no sort of protection on either side. The appearance was alarming, but to cross it was dreadful: when we were approaching it, the Yamstchick commenced shouting to his horses, and applying the short whip without any mercy, to get up energy enough to carry us quickly over; for as the part we were on sunk down with the weight of the carriage into the water, and the part before us kept on the surface, the horses had to be always pulling up-hill, and this over an oscillating road with bad footing was a difficult task: they went over it galloping at full speed, the water splashing away from us on each side.

On entering the town, we told the boy to drive us to the Hotel de St. Petersburg, in the grand square, having heard that it was a fine house, and to our great joy we found it so,—a large white house of splendid exterior; but unfortunately there had been others recommended to it, for the interior was full. The waiter to whom we spoke understood German, and explained that it was impossible to accommodate us even for that night with any sort of

a room, but gave us the address of another hotel, the "Stadt London." We drove a little further into the heart of the town, and found it. This also was full of people who had flocked in from the country to see the illuminations which were now going on in honour of the coming coronation. At last, driven from scale to scale, we descended so far as to apply at a sailor's boarding-house near the Docks, to which we had been directed by the fact that the landlady was a Scotchwoman. Discouraged by its physiognomy, my husband objected even to enter, but at last consented to my making some investigation, which I did by accosting a woman at the entrance of a room full of sailors, seated upon wooden benches; she was the mistress herself, and in English, evidently depreciated by want of practice, called me affectionately "My dear," and said we could not stop there, as her house was too dirty and too full. During this transaction our driver had taken the opportunity of loosing his horses, and by the time I got down stairs and into the street the carriage was helpless, and our driver determined: not a step further would he take us, and at last we were in absolute

terror of being left in the street. Nothing short of a heavy bribe induced him to attach his horses. We then determined to drive back to the first hotel, the fine-looking one of St. Petersburg, and off he set, as though he wanted the job over, but before long we became aware that the course was not the right one; in fact, he was driving us out of town, and we learnt afterwards that there was a little inn at some distance of the same name as the hotel. We shouted and stormed in our efforts to stop him, but not a word could he comprehend, but at last we did succeed in bringing him to a stand, by absolute force, and then tried to catch a passer-by who could speak German: at last we succeeded, and turned our exasperated Jehu in the right direction. Of course, on arriving there we were refused admittance, as before, by the same waiter, but we were desperate. "Never mind him," said my husband, "Get out at once, and go in." There was really nothing else to be done; so out I jumped, and pushed my way into the house, protesting that we could sleep anywhere,—in the dining-room, in the hall, or even in the carriage, if they liked; and at last we made

up our minds for the latter, as the magnificence of this mansion had suffered in our estimation considerably by more intimate acquaintance.

There was not an article of any kind in the hall, either furniture or ornament, excepting a dirty three-legged stool. The floors were dirty, the walls dirty, and even the ceiling was dirty; in fact, it was the dirtiest place I ever stepped into; but when we saw the attendants our surprise was diminished: they were dirty enough to have soiled a coal-pit.

CHAP. XIII.

After waiting a while and occupying ourselves in the best way we could, the waiter, overcome by our perseverance and misfortune, came and informed us that the servant of Baron W——ff had resigned his garret in our favour, and we should have the luxury of one tressle bed and a sofa. On going to inspect this delightful benefice, we found a thing like two pairs of scissors, with a pocket handkerchief stretched between them, and a few tumbled clothes upon it to represent a bed; the sofa was a sofa, and that's all.

Previous to going to bed, however, we tried to procure some supper, as we had had nothing to eat or drink since our cup of tea at the *Bubje*, seventeen hours ago. In order to get it, we rung repeatedly at the bell, which was "*the Bell*" par excellence, for all the wires from all the rooms went to it. It was no use,

however, for, ring as much as we chose, no one came to attend. I several times went out into the passages, up and down stairs, and through the hotel in all directions, but not a creature answered our call, until at last I captured a fugitive maid-servant running the gauntlet along the passage, and after asking for some supper, we obtained tea, bread, and meat of some sort, but the latter of so uninviting a character as to induce us to pay all our attention to the dry bread, which was very good. We afterwards accidentally discovered a little sliding shutter, about three inches square, in our room door, and on making inquiries found that it was usual to open it as soon as "the bell" had been rung, in order that the light shining through in the dark passage might show who had rung it, much on the same principle as the little tablets which stand out of the wall in the modern English gaols, enabling an attendant to see from the end of a long corridor the cell in which he is wanted; it turned out also that our energetic ringing had astonished all the officials of the hotel, who were flying about in all directions but could find no sign of being required; on entering the hotel, we had been promised that

our luggage should be sent up immediately, and having finished our suppers, we began to be anxious for a change of clothing, which we had not had since leaving *Tilsit*. Notwithstanding our exhausted state, we had determined on taking a walk through the town, our curiosity having been excited by the brilliant illuminations which were everywhere visible; we found, however, more difficulty in this than we expected, for our luggage did not make its appearance at the appointed time. After repeatedly ringing, and being as often answered that it was coming, I was induced to go out of my room in the hopes of furthering matters by a personal demand; I left our garret, which was entirely in the roof, and found my way by some piece of good fortune out of our dark passage to the head of a stair of spacious dimensions; over this landing there swung a miserable little oil lamp, whose feeble light scarcely betrayed its own existence, and still less served the purpose for which it was intended; beneath, upon the floor, and for some distance round about, lay a heap of old broken furniture, whose dismal crooked limbs, and still more distorted shadows in this dim obscurity, were suggestive of anything comfortless and horrible.

Our companions in these ethereal regions were by no means aristocratic, for they were low class Russians, and clothed in most remarkable style, as their pink shirts were worn outside the rest of their clothes, and hung round them like a blouse; these were probably servants to some of the nobility, who were then crowding the hotel, but no signs of our luggage appeared, and at last, in despair, we were obliged to be content with washing our hands and an extempore toilet. The girl who brought the water surprised us by a display of cleanliness that was new to English people, and totally unexpected in *this* place. After pouring a little water in the basin, she stood patiently by with the jug in her hand. My husband proceeded with his washing at once, and very much to her surprise did it in the usual English fashion; on seeing this she exclaimed in German, "He does'nt know how to wash himself!" and proceeded to give him practical instructions, which were, that he must hold out his hands to receive a small supply of clean water, which, when used, of course fell into the basin, and was never used twice, whilst she, Hebe like, stood with her vase renewing the supply at each application. This custom

has probably arisen from the great number of attendants kept by the Russian nobles, who almost equal our Indian nabobs in the refinement of their retinue. After this operation we sallied forth, and were struck with the beautiful effect produced by a grand display of coloured lamps, which were hung upon a large granite column, with a bronze figure of Victory on the top, standing in the centre of a fine square in front of our hotel. This monument was erected to commemorate the defeat of an attack on the town by a detachment of the French invading army in eighteen hundred and twelve.

On the opposite side is the Castle, which was also illuminated in the same way. On leaving the square we passed along to the Exchange and Town-hall, which were also brilliantly decorated with lights, and indeed every house in the town, large and small, was doing something towards the general display.

After winding about through the narrow crooked streets, following the crowd, and scrambling over a succession of earthworks, we found ourselves mounted upon the ramparts of one of the dismantled forts, which had been constructed for the purpose of giving Sir Charles

Napier, or any of his companions, a salute, if they had happened to pay a visit to the place; we stood quietly enough upon it unmolested and ruminating on the fact that persuasion is better than force. From this position we had an excellent view of the river, which was a gay and exciting scene, the ships being many of them illuminated to the very tops of their masts, and little boats were skimming about in all directions, with rows of various coloured lamps suspended from a pole, which was carried over the heads of the rowers by upright supports at the bow and stern. The moving clusters were like strings of beads, and the constant change going on before our eyes without the cause being visible, produced a fine effect, for the night was so dark as almost entirely to conceal the boats and men; the excitement was further kept alive by incessant firing from one to another, the whole of the patriots in the town having become aquatic, in order the better to display their loyalty. Having satisfied our curiosity and desire for the beautiful, we ventured to retrace our steps with considerable caution, having already found that the rough state of these earthworks was by no means con-

ducive to rapid safe travelling in the dark. After many a tumble we at last reached the streets, and were delighted to find that our steps were no longer in danger from darkness, for the overflowing patriotism had not only covered the buildings with light, but had even descended to the pavement. On the edge of the footwalk were placed tin vessels about a yard apart, containing a mixture of tar and oil and floating wicks, to avoid the smoke from which gave the passers by sufficient occupation to keep them from enjoying the effect of the light, the enjoyment I should say was rather doubtful; as, what with the soot and horrible smell, and the filthy state of the parapet in consequence of many cans being overturned at intervals, we arrived at our hotel in a state very congenial with the character of our residence; but choked and dirty as we were, it was a consolation to know that we were not so conspicuous as if we had been at home.

We were in expectation of the luxury of a complete change of raiment, when to our chagrin we found the luggage still upon the carriage, and no persuasion could induce the people of the hotel to take it off, for when they took out a lantern to look at it, notwithstanding our

offers to assist them, the only result was a determined shake of the head and *"Niet!"* with a promise that it should be at our room door by six o'clock in the morning.

So there was nothing left but to go to bed as we were, and my husband gallantly gave up the bed to me, and took the sofa himself; but he, dear fellow, notwithstanding his liberality, got the best of it after all, for when I came to use my couch, it shut up with me, and nearly annihilated his poor wife; we lay a considerable time before going to sleep, grumbling and wondering what sort of quarters we might expect for the few days we intended to remain here, if this was the beginning! Tired as we were I cannot say that we slept well, for bad uncomfortable beds, dirty clothes, and the filthy unpleasant smell of the place, conjoined with our anxiety for six o'clock, were by no means conducive to slumber; six o'clock did at last come, and a fine morning with it, the sun shone in at our pigeon hole of a window, and served a little to cheer its inmates; our garret being in the roof, caused the ceiling to adapt itself to inhabitants of any stature, as it sloped from a tolerable height on one side to almost nothing

at the other, in fact we found ourselves in a chamber very much like the inside of a wedge, with a door in the thick end and a tiny window near the thin one.

We were soon up and ringing, but this time remembered to open the peep-hole, at which we had the pleasure soon after to see the eye of an attendant; seeing we were on the *qui vive* he applied his ear to receive orders, which were "that our luggage should be sent up," his mouth next appeared at the opening, saying that it would be sent up directly, his nose was not called into service on this occasion, and indeed we were convinced that it was not a very useful organ in Russia, or they could never live in company with such odours as we experienced here, for we afterwards found the same peculiar smell in almost every house where we stayed; it seems to be a compound effluvium of leather and dirty sheep skin clothing, and as the houses are always kept by the stoves at such a high temperature, the effect of these bad smells when warmed up, may be better imagined than described. We lay for some time expecting the return of our messenger; but as he did not come we rung again with the determination to reward

our patience with a breakfast; this *did* come at last, and was anything but refreshing, the only things we dare partake of were bread and eggs; by this time it was nearly eleven o'clock, the waiter then said it was no use bringing our luggage up stairs, as there would presently be a suite of apartments at liberty in consequence of the departure of Baron W——ff, who had occupied the best rooms in the hotel; this was indeed good news, as we should descend from the garret to comfortable lodgings on the ground floor. The only course then was to make the best of our position until the baron should leave; this we did by going out as we were, in hopes of getting at least pure air to breathe, but to our great disappointment found it nearly as bad outside, although it was a beautiful day; when we returned we were delighted to find that the Baron had gone, and were at once with great ceremony shown into our new apartments, which consisted of a saloon and a bedroom, the magnificence of which may be conceived from the fact that the floors were paved with common Dutch bricks, and not a bit of carpet or covering of any description upon them, nothing but lame furniture, evidently ready for

the hospital at the top of the stairs. A three-legged sofa, which had to support itself against the wall for want of a fourth, two or three rough ricketty chairs, and a pair of tressels with a deal board upon them, constituted the table. The furniture of the bedroom was in the same style, two creaking little beds and *one* chair; we were in despair when we learnt that there were no better apartments in the hotel. As we had some letters of introduction, and of course expected visitors, we could have put up with anything for ourselves, but we really could not have felt comfortable to ask any one else into such a place. Having now become tired of waiting for our boxes, and feeling strongly the truth of the old proverb which says, "Those who want anything done well must do it themselves," my husband sallied forth and mounted heartily to his task, but no sooner was he seen on the top of the coach, and at work loosing the luggage, than the force of example operating upon the consciences of the lazy attendants, they all rushed in a body to vindicate their individual characters, and with so much assistance the portmanteaus were off in a twinkling, and in our apartments, where their contents were

gladly welcome and eagerly turned to account; in fact we dressed for dinner, to partake of which we visited the *salle à manger*, and found therein a company consisting of one officer with medals decorating his breast sufficient for three or four, he seemed inclined to be communicative and so were we, but notwithstanding all our efforts at conversation, we were at last reduced to pantomime, having tried every language of which we had the slightest knowledge, and he on his side made a great many different sorts of sounds, but as they were in all probability only variations of Russ, we were completely defeated in our attempts to understand each other, at which he seemed very much disappointed, but it did not spoil his dinner; one of the principal ingredients of it was a dish which attracted our attention as it was quite new to us, and as we were dining *à la carte*, we were anxious to obtain the name of it, in order that we might ask for some; on inquiry from the waiter, who couldn't speak a word of anything but Lettish, which we did'nt understand at all, we learned that it was called *shtshie;* being satisfied with the name, we made a memorandum of it, and ordered some. It turned out to be a soup

composed of cabbage and milk, by no means a contemptible dish, and we afterwards found that it is a national favourite. After dinner we strolled out again, and when night came on had another opportunity of admiring the illuminations which were still going on, we returned in good time and went to bed, had a better night's rest, and next day found ourselves in a fit state to make use of our letters, which we did to our advantage, as one of our new friends, a young Russian gentleman, at once insisted on our removing from this wretched place to private lodgings, which he kindly procured for us, with a nice little woman of a landlady, who became a great favourite. We now learned the reason of the dreadful poverty of furniture in our late habitation; as it appears that this house is the one frequented by the nobility, who usually carry their own furniture with them, a practice which obtains all over Russia. We soon made ourselves comfortable in our new home, as the apartments were well furnished and cleanly kept, and on the first night showed ourselves as loyal as the rest of the inhabitants, by placing a number of wax candles in every window, at the suggestion of our landlady, who was fully im-

pressed with the necessity of doing so from the fact that those who did not would subject themselves to official attentions. The blinds were never down during this time, which it may be easily imagined was anything but pleasant in the evening, as our sitting room was the one fronting the street, and the intense light displayed the interior to perfection; in the day time, however, the open window was an advantage, as there was an agreeable prospect, a beautiful church spire, tall and well proportioned, rising beside a sombre oriental dome, stood out clearly against a brilliant blue sky, whose pure vault seemed so far above them. At this time of year, the twelfth of September, (but in Russia the first,)* the atmosphere is generally clear enough at home, but here it is particularly so, more like the keen cutting air we have felt in the north of Scotland on a fine day. We were now comfortably settled for our sojourn, and had ample opportunity of making ourselves acquainted with the town.

* In Russia the Calendar is still calculated in the old style.

CHAP. XIV.

Riga is a place of considerable importance, situated on a sandy plain, about five miles from the mouth of the Dwina* and is the capital of the government of Livonia. It is surrounded on the south side by the forest of Courland, through which we had driven, and on the north side extends towards an open country. It has a population of about sixty thousand (the greater number of whom are employed in connection with the shipping), and is strongly fortified, by being surrounded with walls and bastions: within the wall is the old part of the city, which is on the north side of the river, consisting of irregular, crooked and narrow streets, badly drained; there are many public buildings, and a great number of churches, but

* This is sometimes called the South Dwina or Dvina, to distinguish it from another river of the same name, which discharges itself into the White Sea, at Archangel.

none of the latter display much architectural merit, excepting the one already described, as visible from our sitting-room window, which is dedicated to St. Peter. The Exchange is a handsome new building, and contains some fine polished granite columns. The Town-hall and Castle are both large edifices. The latter is ancient, as it was built by the early Teutonic Knights, and is now occupied by the Governor-General of the Livonian province. The suburbs are extensive on both sides of the river, and considerably larger and better laid out than the old portion of the town. The houses are of a more modern and better description, being the residences of the merchants and wealthier class of inhabitants. The commerce here is very considerable, only second to St. Petersburg as a Russian Baltic port; large quantities of produce are exported from this place, the principal of which consists of corn, hemp, flax, timber, and tallow, which are brought here from the interior by three modes of conveyance, varying with the seasons of the year.

The greater portion is floated down in the spring, immediately after the thaw and during the floods, when the water is deep enough to

carry the rafts over the shoals, which are very numerous in the river; large flat bottomed barges are built for the purpose in the heart of the country, of rough timber, during the winter, without dressing, except what is done with an axe, and are held together by wooden pegs. Timbers are selected with natural bends to form the proper shape of the vessels, which are of immense size, many of them holding a sufficient quantity to load half a dozen ordinary ships, and are broken up and sold in lots when they are unloaded, which is done by the people who have descended the river with them; when they get clear of the barges and their cargoes they return in large gangs back to their homes, a distance of three hundred miles, walking the whole way, and sleeping at nights in places called coops, which are long low mud houses, built for the accommodation of carters and their horses, and affording only the same accommodation for man and beast, as they both sleep in the same straw. The barges are built and loaded near *Desna* and *Vitepsk*, the first named place being about two hundred miles up the river, the latter a hundred miles further, and receive the contributions of the country people

around, who bring their produce on sledges to these places during the winter, before the time for starting in the spring. There are also small quantities brought down to Riga during the same time in sledges on the ice. As the river is frozen hard enough to bear traffic during four or five months in the year, this probably renders it less necessary for the Russians to make roads, as they would only be of use during the summer months, and sledges are found to be much more economical than carts, as a horse will of course take a much heavier weight with him on the ice than he could do in a cart on even a good smooth road. There is, however, some little cart traffic carried on in the summer. The carts are small, roughly made things, the wheels very light, and much less than a yard in diameter. The horses are small, like large ponies in size, but not in shape, resembling rather cart horses in miniature, many of them without a shoe to their feet, taking a load of three or four hundred weight, with which they will travel for three or four hundred miles. They still keep up the ancient oriental custom of travelling in companies; we have seen many scores following each other in Indian file, in different parts of the

empire, threading their way through the forests, amongst sandhills, and over the marshes; during the journey the horses cost their owners nothing for provender, the only food they get to eat is grass, and that they have to get for themselves, for they are loosed and allowed to range about where there is any to be found, and during these times the masters occupy themselves with repairing their vehicles, which usually require it; indeed they seem to be a combination of ropes and splinters, and many of them with prudent foresight carry a spare wheel in reserve. The whole affair, however, is so trifling in value, and the expenses of their journey so light, that surprising as it may seem, the sale of their small load in Riga is remunerative, even though it should consist of nothing more valuable than tallow, which it frequently does. The river, however, is the great highway for trade to Riga; in fact it is the fountain from which the port derives its existence. For twelve months previous to our visit, there had been, on account of the late war, great depression in all trades, but especially of that in timber, which is one of the most important, as there were no men available to clear it out of the forests and float it down

the river; and, indeed, had it been brought to Riga, it could not have gone further on account of the blockade of the port, which was severely felt here, as well as in the whole of the Baltic provinces, for we learned from reliable authorities that had the war lasted another year, the consequences would have been unavoidably ruinous.

CHAP. XV.

During winter the traffic across the river is carried on upon the ice; indeed, for months, the river disappears altogether under a stout covering, which is soon strong enough in this climate to bear the weight of horses and sledges, becoming, in fact, a continuation of the town from one side to the other: this lasts for months, during which time the river is forgotten and treated in every way as part of the dry land. The Russians are so much more in favour of sledge drawing than the rough jolting of wheel carriage that this season is looked forward to with great pleasure; the first ride in the sledge is an incident of especial interest; this takes place as soon as the snow becomes hard enough to carry them. The transition state from soft weather to frost is a season of great discomfort, occupying a period sometimes of from eight to ten days, during which time the communication

across is entirely stopped as the raft previously mentioned, which serves as a bridge in summer, has to be removed when the frost makes its appearance; and as it often at the commencement freezes one day and thaws the next, the ice is not sufficiently hard to bear traffic, but still too firm to permit the use of boats; the means of crossing the river is therefore practically cut off. The same thing occurs in the spring when the frost breaks, with an additional danger: for until the icebergs are carried down, the raft cannot be brought into use, and as the river is a considerable width here—about the third of a mile—it is a work of no small importance to place and moor it; but, as the Russians have great experience in the construction of these things, they can throw one across a river or over a soft marsh in as little time as it would take an inexperienced person to design one, even if he were an Englishman. The experience gained in this way proved serviceable to them in the late war, for we have no doubt that the raft constructed so rapidly in the retreat from the south side of Sebastopol was of this description. The raft consists of rows of balks placed end to end across the river, and upon them is laid a layer

of planks parallel with the stream, and of course lying across the balks, to which they are nailed, and the whole being firmly moored is then ready for use.

Along the quay on the north side of the river is a large provision market tolerably well supplied with vegetables and fruit; the market for butchers' meat is more in the centre of the town, but contains, apparently, only poor specimens of this important article of food when contrasted with the most ordinary appearance of such places at home. We required to be told the name of each particular animal hung up for sale, as it would have been quite pardonable in any one inexperienced in anatomy to mistake one of their sheep for a large cat. We are now within the sanctum sanctorum of the town, what, as an illustration, may be compared to "the city," in London, being, as usual, an old fortified place, distinguished from the more modern suburbs by the remains of the original enclosure which, in this case, consists of a stone wall and an embankment, the latter constructed in rather a peculiar manner; the form is that of a simple embankment with stepped sides and consists of alternate layers of earth and small tree trunks laid with

their ends out towards the faces of the bank; these layers are repeated throughout the whole height, and no doubt add greatly to both the permanence of the work and its efficiency as a defence.

One of the squares in the town is used as a market place for hemp, and upon market days it was curious to see the great number of primitive looking carts from the country, standing with their little loads for sale; these carts, as well as all those used in the town, were greased with a mixture of tar and oil, a commodity which appears so plentiful that it was to be found in every spot in the town where a cart had been seen, the naves of the wheels into which the axles work are so long, and project so far beyond the wheels on each side, that the necessity of keeping their own side of the way to avoid these, will most likely be a means of preventing many awkward collisions, and it would be interesting perhaps to discover if there is any real reason why a peculiarity which in England could not be tolerated, should be allowed to remain in a town of so much importance as Riga; from the ends of these conical projections there is a continual fountain of this abominable

black slime dropping over the whole streets in such quantities, that the pavement is completely covered, to the great discomfort of all foot passengers; as a many of the streets are without *trottoirs*, it is impossible to walk without stepping into it, and as it sticks pertinaciously to anything that comes within its reach, becomes like all other forced acquaintances, exceedingly unpleasant; but the streets are offensive enough without the addition of this nuisance, as the total absence of any drainage causes the water to stand and stagnate on the surface in the channels, the effluvium from which is very disagreeable, and far from salubrious. The little carts already mentioned as being used here, are sources of continued interest and picturesque effect, for they are perpetually falling in pieces, and causing groups of interrupted promenaders to congregate about the places when these accidents occur, it however seems here to have lost that unlooked for character which an accident is supposed to possess, for it appears to enter into the carters' calculations, as he is always provided with a piece of old rope for the purpose of repair, and many of the vehicles seemed to be living memorials to the patience

and ingenuity of their owners. You could scarcely turn out of one street into another without seeing a cart prostrate and more or less in ruins; indeed at first it had all the effect of suggesting an epidemic of decay amongst the wheeling fraternity. Their development of coaching art seems to be no further forward than that of their more plebeian vehicles, for the best of the cabs is only a box without a lid on wheels, without any attempt at more spring than is naturally possessed by a rigid axle; we had, however, not yet become so luxurious as to require it for our comfort, and after the bumping of our own conveyance over the road hither, we were afterwards not prepared to complain at what we got in using these, though to our readers it will be evident that it must have been bad enough. A short distance from the town is a very fine pleasure garden, with walks, much resorted to by the inhabitants; during the evening a band of music plays, and there is a café where refreshments are to be had; here the visitors can enjoy a cigar, which they are not allowed to do in the streets of the town, as there was a decree passed by the late Emperor Nicholas prohibiting smoking on the

streets throughout the Empire. The great quantities of hemp and flax exposed, and the number of timber houses, probably induced him to institute this regulation as a precaution against fire.

In England, our notions of enjoyment out of doors, and more especially in public gardens, are associated in some degree with a little finery, or at all events, some attempt at gaiety of dress, but here it would not have seemed at all unreasonable to say the people were dressed for a funeral, the only portion of the figure visible out of their costume is the head, for the remainder is enveloped from the neck down to the feet in a long cloak, or *schooba*, as it is called.

This luxury stands out in strong contrast to the clothing of the defenders of the country in these parts; here the soldier is far enough from the capital to render him useless as an object of display, and to be a soldier here only entitles a man to rank himself one step above a vagrant, as they are left almost entirely without the means of maintenance, and their clothing falls to pieces upon their backs. Our errands were done, and our parcels carried by one of these poor ragged wretches to whom a few coppers were a fortune.

CHAP. XVI.

During our stay we made several acquaintances, and were invited out to what they called their country seats; and one of the invitations was accompanied by a particular request that we would not think of walking but take a *carriage*, as the road was rather dangerous from wolves. Of course, habit does a great deal both for men and wolves; and, perhaps, they have both got so accustomed to each other as to be rather friendly in these parts; but the warning had certainly an effect upon me as, being a stranger, I should not have derived any protection from the fact, especially as we had to return home in the dark late at night. However, we did go to see them, and found that these country seats were built of wood in rough timber logs slightly flattened with the axe on two sides, so that when laid one upon the other with a layer of moss between, they formed a tolerably tight wall; the

ends of the trees meeting at each angle of the house were cut so as to interlace with each other, and were fastened with wooden pegs.

The interior of these houses is made pretty comfortable, as they contain large rooms and are kept very warm by stoves, which we found afterwards in St. Petersburg in greater perfection. There is a similarity in most points to each other, square solid blocks of building only one storey high, with a sort of terrace and verandah in front and the end, the trees at each angle projecting so much beyond the walls gives the edifice a remarkably rough unfinished appearance, contrasting very disadvantageously with our recollections of the neatly-framed timber houses of Switzerland. The terrace is approached by steps, and the front part protected by a rail, over which the outer garments, both masculine and feminine, are flung, to remain there like dogs at the door until their owners come out again. This was by no means in accordance with my notion of either propriety or comfort, for the cold air and perhaps moisture do not seem to be any less injurious in Russia than in England when applied in the shape of a cold envelope to the warm body on leaving the house.

The roads to these places were thoroughly Russian, and kept up the same total disregard for either direction or surface, that was so characteristic of what we have already described, and our wheels were frequently either stuck fast in sand or thumped to pieces over lumps of wood; but, notwithstanding all this, an enthusiastic friend who accompanied us was anxious that we should have a good opinion of his country. He had travelled over many parts of the southern continent, and had been some months in England; but, assured us, although he enjoyed London and Paris very much for a short time, "that there were no real comforts to be found out of Russia!"

The language in use in polite society in Riga is German, and we found the people remarkably hospitable, as they received us with great kindness, and it was owing to the generous activity of one of our earliest acquaintances there that we were rescued from durance vile in the Hotel de St. Petersburg.

The Russian bath is almost as well known, if not as highly esteemed, as that of the Turks, but there are many peculiarities about it which are so totally different, as to deserve notice, and

my curiosity having been aroused by vivid descriptions, I determined to try practically what it was like; for this purpose I was accompanied by my landlady, who however ultimately succeeded in changing my intention, as she firmly insisted that I should be laid up for a week after it; her description of the process and the sight of the bunches of twigs had the desired effect, and I did *not* take a bath. The establishment to which we went is in the faubourg, and contains accommodation for public and private bathers of both sexes.

On approaching the place, we found that the poorer classes carried their own bunches of birch twigs, with the leaves still on them, these were to be used in the bath, those who could afford fresh ones each time could purchase them at the entrances, where they were stacked up round a room like bundles of firewood; it was in this place that we took our tickets, as we did not wish to be excluded because we were not bathers. On entering, however, we had a narrow escape from being so, for the attendants came crowding around to undress me, and it was only by repeated replies of *sitchas*, "by and by," that they were kept off a sufficient time to enable me to

see as much as I wished. On entering the place there was nothing visible but a dense fog of hot vapour, but as my eyes became accustomed to the place, there gradually appeared masses of figures having the natural outlines of the human form. The various and complicated attitudes in which they were placed, rendered it more difficult at first to distinguish their positions,—some lying in one way, others in another, and all actively engaged in promoting perspiration and circulation; this was effected by means of a stove, having three large shelves, the lowest being a degree cooler than the second, and that again not so hot as the uppermost.

Upon these, in succession, the bathers are laid, rolled about, thumped, and beaten all over with the bunches of birch twigs, and the infliction seems to be a great source of enjoyment; it is only determined bathers, however, who can support the highest step; scrubbing with shavings is another feature of the process, and pouring pails of cold water over the panting patient,—all this is done by naked attendants. The expenses are very trifling for the common bath, not more than a few halfpence of English money, but for a first-class private bath you

must pay a rouble or three shillings and fourpence.

The only place of amusement we could discover was the theatre, and, in pursuance of our maxim to see everything, went there; it, however, did not repay the visit on its own account, for it is a dirty place and uncomfortable to sit in, but the performers happening to be a German company of tolerable excellence, we enjoyed "Der Freischutz," and were satisfied. The audience seemed to be chiefly military, for at least half were in uniform.

Having now spent several days in Riga and seen all that was interesting to us, we began to think of getting on to St. Petersburg; for this purpose it was necessary to obtain our pass and Padaroshna, as we must now conform to the regulations previously alluded to with regard to passports, for which purpose we had to appear at the police-office; we were minutely questioned as to our business in Russia, where we belonged to, my christian and maiden name, where we were born, how old we were, and a great many more impertinent questions, to all of which we were compelled to give satisfactory answers; and, after all, were told to call again next day,

when the important documents would be delivered, and even then we had to wait an hour before we got them. We were now ready to start, but not having yet received our books which had been siezed at Tawroggen and promised to be restored to us here, we determined, as a last resource, to apply at head quarters. I accordingly went in person to the censors' chambers where I found a committee of four, who patiently received all the abuse I gave them on account of our disappointment. They politely promised to do their best and would forward them after us to St. Petersburg, free of charge. Not content with this, and from previous experience, having little faith in their promises, we resolved to apply a little external pressure in the shape of a word from the British Consul, Mr. S——t, to whom we paid a visit, and were received with great affability and politeness, and subsequent results proved that we were indebted to him for at least punctuality in performing his promises of assistance, but nevertheless we did not succeed in obtaining the books before our departure.

CHAP. XVII.

During our stay here the carriage had been safely stowed away in the remise of the hotel, as they had by great persuasion been induced to give it shelter; we had it sent down to our lodgings, but when we made the attempt to start there was not a creature in the place who knew how to tie a box on.

We found our preparation to be a work of several hours' labour, and during the whole of this time I stood! yes, stood! by the side of the carriage, anxiously watching the progress of the *Dvorniks*, whose efforts seemed rather to impede than assist each other. They first tried one way of tying them, then another, first the chains were to be in one direction, then it was found that the boxes would shake off, and even the boxes themselves had to change places with the portmanteaus; no advice of ours was of any avail, and it was only by absolutely *commanding*

and making a total change of operations that we succeeded in getting off at all.

This time both horses and drivers were tolerable, and we had strong hopes of a successful journey, but as another disappointed mortal has said,—

"The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft astray."

For two posts the road was excellent, the first was called *Rodenpoys,* near which we crossed the *Boulder Aa,* a river of considerable width, navigable as far as *Venden,* a distance of probably about sixty miles from its mouth, passing *Volmar* about ten miles lower down; both these are important villages, as they are the ports to which the produce of the surrounding district is brought, chiefly consisting of flax, hemp and corn. The road from Riga crosses the river about ten miles from its outlet into the gulf, by a large timber bridge, of good construction, supported at a considerable elevation above the stream, upon solid timber piers planted in the bed of the river, protected from the concussion of the heavy masses of ice which float down during the spring by triangular islands of timber at a distance of about twenty yards up the stream.

These consist of piles driven firmly into the bed of the river, and tied together by other timbers, so as to form a solid mass from bottom to top. The necessity of such precautions as these forcibly reminded us that we were in a cold country.

At *Engelshardshof,* the second post house, the road ceased, and we again dropped to our great consternation, into the same uncultivated sort of track as that which had tortured us in Courland.

It will be remembered that in Königsberg I purchased a pillow and some material to make a cover for it, in the vain delusion that it would be possible to use needle and thread in our drive, but not one stitch dare I attempt, as respect for my fingers totally prevented it; however, during the time I was in Riga, a magnificent costume was produced, and the pillow was serviceable in protecting me from many of the bumps that would otherwise have been unbearable. Of course our carriage could not stand it long, and after the proper amount of ill-usage snap went one of the bolts, and the poor vehicle became again an invalid. On arriving at *Raup,* our first care was to find some one with skill enough to repair it, for although at each post house there is a smithy

for the purpose of shoeing such horses as wear shoes, still the difficulty is to get hold of the smith, and he is not generally worth much when he is found; here, however, we were extremely fortunate, as immediately opposite the post-house was a hospital for broken down carts and sledges, many of which lay scattered about; the place was a compound of smithy and wheelwright's shop. The first thing, however, was to find the post-master, and it was only after loud and repeated clamouring in vain that I went into the inner room and there discovered the individual fast asleep on one of the benches; he was unwilling enough to be disturbed, but at last did get as far as the door, called over the way to the smith, beckoned him to come, demanded our Padaroshna, and then left us to the mercies of the son of Vulcan and his assistants, three or four of whom spent two hours and a half in repairing, screwing up, tightening straps, and rebinding old fractures with ropes, until at last we were ready to start again, but did not get out of this case without paying damages of four roubles and fifty kopecks, or about fifteen shillings; during the whole of this time we had been standing in pouring rain, as nothing is to be done in

Russia without personal superintendence, and the smell of the house was so intolerable that although we tried it several times we could not bear to remain inside; when we left, it was beginning to get dark, night was coming on, and the rain pouring in torrents, and long before reaching *Lenzenhoff*, the next post, it was so dark that our six little horses could scarcely have been able to see each other, they went, however, creeping along, plunging out of one hole into another, until at length, weary and dispirited, we arrived, and found that we could go no further, for they refused to take us on, as the road was in such wet weather totally impassable in the dark; we were compelled, therefore, to make up our minds to remain some hours, until the moon rose. Our poor post-boy was such a pitiable figure, half naked, and completely soaked through, that we could not help asking him into the house, and inquiring for some *vodka** for him, a request which seemed to astonish the post-master, for when we explained that it was on account of the cold night, he opened his eyes and said in ill-natured German, "Pooh, what does that matter."

* A coarse raw grain spirit made from corn.

The only means we had of making ourselves comfortable here were the benches, of which we have already spoken as being a feature of all the post-houses. There is also in each of them a large brick stove which is built in the wall between the two rooms, and, being half exposed in each apartment, warms both from one fire. These stoves are covered outside with white glazed tiles neatly put on, and, in some cases, rather prettily finished with a cornice, and reach from the bottom to the top of the room, which is continually kept at a high temperature. This was some comfort for us amidst so much that was disagreeable. Previous to trying to get any rest we endeavoured to procure some food, which presented itself in the shape of tea and black bread, the latter, of course, quite uneatable. The tea, however, was warm and consoling; after which, we prepared ourselves to roost on our wooden seats just as we were, and remained in the place five hours, passing our time in at least quiet relief from the tumbling of the carriage, but not sleeping, for the necessity of watching the luggage prevented that. We could see it through a window of the room upon the carriage standing in the rain.

At last the moon was kind enough to show her face, and the rain ceased for a little; we gathered ourselves together and prepared to go. After five hours' baking in an oven, such as this place, it may be easily imagined how much we felt the cold night air on leaving it. Shivering, and thoroughly miserable; half jaded, and in that powerless state accompanying want of sleep, we entered our carriage, which had been standing the whole time in the merciless rain, and was damp and comfortless as a vault. Oh! but it was a dreary start this time, and looking forward did nothing to enliven it. More bad roads, more bad posts, and rain evidently in prospect, we were almost glad to have our attention occupied by the exertion necessary to keep our seats. There was also a frequent cause of excitement in our lamps being blown out, and the difficulty of re-lighting them under such circumstances. For the whole of the next day we were plunging about up to our axles in water through an immense forest for 100 English miles, each successive mile exactly like the last—a splashy broken waste, amongst noble pines, whose tall and graceful forms were the only pleasant objects we had to look upon for the

whole journey to *Ouddern*, the sixth post from our last stoppage. At night, however, the dense wood on each side rendered it extremely dismal; and, when we pulled up at last before the door of the house at Ouddern, we were scarcely sorry to hear that we could not be taken any further. Even here there was no variety—nothing to relieve the unbroken dreariness, for the house was exactly the same—the tea, the rain, the moon, *all* the same; and when we started again into another length of the forest, we could easily have imagined that we had lost a day and were only in yesterday morning again. We had, however, soon a little variety in arriving at *Dorpat*, which we had expected to reach the night before in the hopes of obtaining a comfortable night's rest, as it is a place of considerable importance and renown; we, however, only changed horses at the post-house, which is at the entrance to the town; and, as it was just getting daylight, we thought the town looked rather pretty. It is situated on the side of a steep hill, and in the bottom of the valley flows the *Embach*, over which the road is carried by a stone bridge. The houses are chiefly painted of light colours, and after

crossing the river we passed a number of neat villas. Altogether, the town impressed us very favourably, and the view, on looking back upon it, when we reached the summit of the hill, was very fine; and the calm quietness, in which it lay sleeping, was by no means suggestive of the troubled history which it had gone through in former years. The fineness of the morning seemed to have occurred just at the right time, for immediately after this the rain came down again. The roads got into their old state, and the cheerful little town was supplanted by more dense forests; we only wanted a broken bolt to revive the misery of the day before, and before reaching *Torma* we got it. Smash it went, and the whole of our infliction was complete. This time we were not so fortunate in our smith, for he had no bolt and no tools with which to make one. It was still pouring, and, whilst I stood under the shelter of the verandah, (which is, in most cases, over the doors of the post-houses,) my husband was working as hard as two or three smiths, to assist the one who ought to have been sufficient for the work. We were by no means entirely discouraged up to this point, because our stock of

determination was great; but, when the bolt, which had been with such immense difficulty, fabricated, was put into its place and screwed up, it broke! and my courage went with it.

The rain was pouring down, and night rapidly closing in; and here were we two solitary strangers with a disabled vehicle, and not a house to be seen for miles around to which we could go for shelter, excepting the abominable post-house, and my heart sickened at the prospect of spending another night such as we had had before. My husband put me into the carriage for shelter, and went to the smithy in order to assist in getting another bolt made, which happily turned out to be a perfect one. After a delay of two hours, we got away from the place—creeping cautiously along in the stormy night through a country worse than ever, our carriage positively up to the axles in water, and almost floating the whole way, plunging and splashing at every step, until almost worn out by fatigue and anxiety lest our repairs should again give way, we, to our great joy, reached *Nennal*, the next post, in safety, from which place we started, with a relay of horses, without more than the usual delay, which was better than we expected. As the night was so

stormy and dark we feared that they would have refused to take us any further until morning.

Although the distance to the next place was less than ten miles, it took three hours to get over it, what with tumbling into holes, the lamps going out, and the occasional snapping of the ropes, which, as we have already said, served the part of traces, we were kept in a continual fever of anxiety, for if any accident had occurred we felt convinced that the driver would have gone off with his horses, and left us there helpless as we might be, for he had no concern with us beyond the lugging of our vehicle from one place to another, and if it would'nt go with him he could'nt help it, and this view of the case was rendered very forcible to our minds by the recollection that we had been served so in Italy, under equally unfortunate circumstances, by the breaking of an axle, the postillion politely saying he was very sorry, wishing us a "*buon giorno,*" and leaving us to our fate. This time, however, we were more fortunate, and reached *Rannapoungern,* on the west side of the lake *Peipus;* it is a small village of a few log huts, one of which is the post-house; it was about two o'clock in the morning when we reached this place, and were

sorry to be informed that there were no horses; we had our own private doubts about it, as we knew it was not their custom to willingly turn out on such a night as that; we, however, had to make the best of it, and did so by ordering some tea, which was the same as at other houses, cool tea and black bread, the hot water being as usual brought in a little white porcelain teapot. The first few posts on our journey we were in the habit of looking into it, but found it always in such a state as prevented us taking our tea; now, as we found it absolutely necessary to have something to sustain life, and there was really nothing else to be had, the only thing was to reconcile ourselves to it, and this we did by never looking inside. At four o'clock, however, we succeeded in inducing them to turn out the horses, who had been quietly snoozing in the stables, and their driver in the same bed with them during the whole time they had been supposed to be out. We soon had them at work tugging away with us on the road to *Klein-poungern*. This was a very long post, the road as bad as ever, but as the moon had got up and the rain ceased, our pace improved; and after passing through several long forests, we

arrived. From this place to *Narva* there has been an attempt at making a road, which, so far as our experience serves, is a total failure. It may in its early years have been tolerable, but old age and neglect had reduced it to such a state as would in England be considered impassable; it, however, in consequence of the harder material on the surface, prevented the fears of sinking altogether out of sight, to which we had been liable for the last four hundred and fifty miles.

Some distance before reaching Narva, the evidence of a little care appeared in the state of the country. It was cultivated in parts, and presented a cheerful change from the constant endless pine forest, which, although picturesque at times, becomes rather wearisome when you see little else for days. On arriving at the gates our passport was demanded, examined, and, as soon as they became satisfied that we were not wolves in sheeps' clothing, we were admitted, and passed on through the town, crossing the river Narva by a stone bridge. This stream comes from the lake Peipus, and is of considerable width, flowing over a rocky bed, which breaks the current into pretty cascades. The

town itself has much more of a German character than that of Russia; and, although not of first-class importance, is still a tolerable prosperous-looking place and strongly fortified. We had been indulging in the prospect of a rest here, and a night's comfort *in a bed*, but the sight of the post-house dispelled all our hopes, as it was, if possible, worse than the others; and there was not a creature about who could speak anything but Russian. Hitherto, with the single exception of Bubje, in Courland, we had always been fortunate enough to find some one at the post-houses who had a little German, but here, we lost it altogether; and when I endeavoured to obtain some notion of what we had to pay by using my most Russified German, the only reply was a shake of the head and a confused look. By pantomime, however, it was easy to make them understand what their inclinations were so well prepared for, and the post-master speedily had recourse to the never-failing chalk and counter after an elaborate game of marbles upon an abacus or frame of calculating beads, a primitive method of great antiquity, and exactly similar to what is used now in our infant schools in England. These frames are in

every place where figures are required,—post-houses, banks and shops; and although one would imagine that the constant repetition of the same number of horses to the same distances, would have been sufficient to fix a charge in the post-master's brains, if he had any, still, we always found that they had to go through the mechanical process; and it became a habit with us to ask of each other if the game of marbles was over, as we knew that to be a sign that arrangements were coming to a crisis. The horrible state of this house was beyond all expression; and rather than allow my husband to see the place into which I had ventured, I hurried out with the amount marked on a bit of paper, and was glad to get away as soon as we could. The road was tolerable until we came to the *Rino Luga*, the descent to which is frightfully steep, and we were terrified to perceive a sharp turn at the bottom on to a bridge of boats of considerable length. At the other side rose another steep bank, at the summit of which we found the town of *Jambourg*, a long straggling place, but of great importance as a military station.

CHAP. XVIII.

We passed through a thickly wooded district for the greater part of the distance to the next post, interspersed with tracts of barren country. On stopping at *Opoljé* we found that we had lost a nut, a misfortune for which the smith was evidently prepared, as he had bolts ready made of all descriptions for carriages, this may have arisen from the fact that we were now on a road much more used than any we had yet passed over, owing to its proximity to the capital, but it was still bad enough to smash the carriages and give the smith an opportunity of earning an honest penny for repairs; this was an art he seemed to understand pretty well, as he held the bolt in one hand until he received a rouble in the other.

Soon after leaving here night came on again, so that our pace was slackened, and after the necessary infliction of another post-house, we

jolted on and arrived at *Kascovo* about one in the morning—a bitter cold morning it was, and according to custom I sallied forth to hunt up the post-master, whilst my husband gave the Yamstchik his kopeks and felt about the carriage for fractures.

By this time we were getting thoroughly exhausted; it was now four nights since I had had my clothes off; constant anxiety and want of sleep had produced a false energy which kept me active enough, but in a mazy bewildered state that scarcely allowed me to stand steadily upon my feet. To make the most of sunlight we had been led to push on during each day, and take our only meal, the cup of tea, in the middle of the night, and here we intended to keep up the practice.

The night was very dark, and I stood for some time knocking at the door of the post-house before perceiving that it was open, this door was not as usual a mere porch into the public room, but entered the vestibule at the end of the building, and out of this passage on the right hand was the post-room proper. After waiting more than a reasonable time, I determined to venture in, and upon getting far

enough to perceive that I was in a passage, my foot struck against something soft and shaggy lying on the floor, but it was quite too dark for me to find out what it was. I then went out and told my husband, who at once accompanied me back again, and although he gave it a blow with his foot was equally unsuccessful in arousing it, and as we did not know whether it was a dog or a bear, it was at last determined that we should go outside, shut the door, and raise a louder alarm; this we did, but still without effect, and having now less fear of rousing the sleeping cerberus at the portal, whatever it might be, we went in again, and I found my way through the first room to a second, at the back, in which I saw a faint light, and I certainly never saw a more perfect realization of sleep, for the floor was strewed with prostrate figures, all fast asleep; mujiks in their sheepskins, women, peasants, and wayworn travellers of low caste, but all asleep together, as though they had been standing in friendly conversation one moment and the next struck down motionless in heaps upon the spot. A little lamp stood upon the bench, and picking it quietly up I went back to the door, and in doing so found that my husband was occupied in kick-

ing the shaggy bundle near the door, with an accompanyment of soothing words, such as "poor fellow" "come old boy," and the like, under the impression that it was one of the large rough dogs which are generally kept about these places as a protection from bears and wolves; but at last, with the assistance of of my light, and more energy, he succeeded in arousing a mujik, for it was a man lying there in the cold lobby asleep, where he had laid down upon the bare floor, and we found another to our surprise coiled up behind the front door, which must have struck him had we opened it wide enough; how these people can support the great extremes of temperature to which they expose themselves is to me something wonderful, for here at the door it was bitter cold, whilst inside the house the heat was that of an oven.

Having now satisfied ourselves that there was no danger we went back into the *padaroshna* room intent on business, and I went ranging about to find the post-master; and, at last, found something like him, rolled up, and fast asleep on a bench near the door. Already impatient enough with so much delay, I mercilessly attacked him at once with shaking and abuse in

loud German, thinking to arouse him effectually. He grumbled out a surly reply in Russ, which only induced me to shake him the more heartily and call out, "*Sprechen sie nicht Deutsch,*" when he slowly unrolled himself, rubbed his eyes, and said, sleepily, "*Ja! ja!*" and, to my consternation, I found that I had awakened the wrong man, for he turned out to be a Russian general, who, as soon as he had gathered his senses about him, perceived our mistake, accepted our apologies with a good grace, rose, and, politely offered me his seat, asking, at the same time, what he could do for us. We soon informed him that his services, as interpreter, would be invaluable, as we were English, and not having yet learnt much Russ, did not know well how to ask for what we wanted, besides, his rank as an officer, entitled him (according to Russian customs) to compel obedience at any post-house; and, in this instance, we found it efficient, for the people of the place would have refused entirely to give us any refreshment at this hour of the night, and looked black enough at him when he commanded it. It is useless saying that some allowance should be made for awakening them so unexpectedly, because in a Russian

post-house, when there is nothing else to do, the people always go to sleep on the floors, like so many dogs, at whatever time it may be.

We got very friendly with the general during tea, and he informed us, with a sly look, that he had lately seen plenty of our countrymen, as he had just returned from the Crimea.

Before we had finished our repast the moon rose, and the general prepared for departure; he went off in his telega with three horses, after having prepared it for the concussions of the road with plenty of loose straw in the bottom, on which he sat.

We did not stay long after him, but hurried off from this wretched place, in which we had been an hour and a half; entered our cold carriage at half-past two o'clock in the morning, and scampered over a rough road for two posts to *Strelna*, where we arrived at grey daylight, and, to our great joy, found ourselves on a beautiful *chaussée*, and only one post from St. Petersburg. The long verst posts, to which we had been accustomed up to this point, were now exchanged for fine large granite stones. Opposite the post-house lay the grounds surrounding the Palace of Strelna, a large well-wooded park,

which skirted the road for some distance. We next came to numbers of beautifully situated villas, built of wood and painted yellow; they stand in pleasant plots of land, surrounded by clumps of trees upon a declivity, at the foot of which flows the *Neva*. The sight of these unusual objects enlivened us with a consciousness that, at last, we were approaching the great city. I shall never forget the sensation, although worn out with fatigue, want of food, and loss of sleep, and jaded with the journey through such a wild desolate country as we had passed, amongst a half-civilized people, whose language we could not understand, and not a friend within hundreds of miles. In spite of all this, however, we felt a high degree of excitement in approaching the capital of the Czar's immense dominions, and, at length, pulled up at the Riga-gate, a heavy triumphal arch of no great beauty, having a Roman car on the top, with a figure of Victory driving six horses, which reminded us rather too much of our late equestrian stud to be very well appreciated. Our passport and *padaroshna* were demanded here, and the latter retained. We then, with anxious feelings, drove on,—crossing several canals

and threading our way to the margin of the Neva in search of a boarding-house, which had been recommended to us, as it is kept by two English ladies. On our way through the city we were much struck with the gilded domes shining brilliantly in the morning sun, so totally different to anything we had ever seen before, that in our admiration and awe we almost forgot our past trials, and totally lost the fear of disappointment which had lately attacked us.

CHAP. XIX.

When we arrived at the door of our intended home, the appearance we presented may be better imagined than described.

Our carriage was one solid mass of mud, the accumulated splashes of all the puddles for so many hundred miles having dried upon it in a caked envelope; the whole affair looked rather like a monstrous unbaked brick than anything else. We ourselves were in almost the same state, for we had not changed our raiment since we started, and any toilet we had been able to make was not worthy of the name; and it would have amused the most stoical philosopher to have witnessed the doubtful anxiety with which we looked at each other to see if we were presentable. When we knocked at the door, the boy who answered could speak nothing but Russian, and alarmed us into fear that we were at the wrong place, but he speedily went off in

search of some better educated official and returned with a specimen who had enough of German to comprehend that we wished to stay at the house.

Our vehicle was then trundled into the yard, and in a very short time became a popular character, the whole of the visitors in the house taking their turns to inspect it, and certainly their admiration could not have been excited by its beauty, for a more disreputable broken down looking concern never presented itself in the precincts of a respectable stable yard.

With my husband's assistance, the luggage was got off and into the house, it was soaked through with the incessant rain which had been pouring on it for so long. We were shown into a room on the ground-floor, which most curiously for us had been occupied by Sir Charles Napier a fortnight previously, and we felt almost as though we had assisted him to capture St. Petersburg, and were now coming to take possession.

It was now half-past nine o'clock, and we were glad to find ourselves within shelter of a civilised habitation, and as we were fully prepared to do justice to a good breakfast, it was quickly sent in, and as quickly devoured; our next care

then was to make our toilet, which, with four days' neglect, had grown to be rather an important undertaking, occupying the whole of the time until luncheon, and, notwithstanding our hearty breakfast, we were ready for that also, which, together with the excitement due to our curiosity, so far invigorated us that we determined to take just one little peep at the great place before going to bed, for, notwithstanding our fatigue, we did not exactly like being seen to go to bed in the middle of the day. Our arrival had already been taken notice of by the authorities, for before we had been more than a few minutes in the hotel our passports had been sent for and handed over to the commissary of police, under whose surveillance we were to exist for the next week or two.

On making our *début* in St. Petersburg we went along the quay for a little distance and into some of the streets of the immediate neighbourhood, but whether from the confusion of our brains, or our want of ability to appreciate good things at the first glance, we found our perceptions dull, and our inspection less satisfactory than it should have been, for, on going over the same ground next day, we

were pleased to find that the grandeur of the place was fully equal to what we had been led to expect.

So far, however, we were satisfied that we were really in St. Petersburg, and as it was nearly time for dinner, its attractions were sufficiently powerful to draw us homewards; we had not ventured far enough to require any assistance in finding our way back, as for the first time we found ourselves in a country where we had no means of making ourselves understood; our dinner was as welcome as our breakfast, and having now made up satisfactorily for our four days' starvation, we went like rattlesnakes to bed, and remained dormant for fully one round of the clock; we might, perhaps, have remained even longer had we not been obliged to rise and present ourselves at Count Orloff's office, otherwise we ran some risk of being taken out against our inclination, for it is necessary that strangers, on the first or second day of their arrival, report their presence to the minister for foreign affairs, and obtain from him papers which must be taken to the alien office, in order to obtain the *carte de séjour*, to which reference has already been made; even

when this has been obtained, and all the formalities complied with, it is expected that visitors again shew themselves in a few days, to keep up the security that they are within reach.

On this occasion we were kept waiting for some time, amongst a crowd of Germans and French, all on the same errand. The official who received us in our turn had our passport amongst his papers, and commenced a catechism of questions respecting our objects in visiting Russia, the time we intended remaining, our ages, my maiden and christian name, and many other remarkable inquiries, all conducted with a politeness which would have been perfectly overpowering had it not been in French. On our liberation from this operation we were told that as our passport was not vised by the British consul nothing could be done for us, and we were compelled to journey off again in a chace through the town for the Danish consul, who had been appointed to act for England until our own deputy arrived. This difficulty arose from the late war, as the arrangements of our government had, of course, required time to develop into maturity, and the new consul himself really arrived two

days before we left the country. The whole transaction occupied us the greater part of the day, but at last we got all our papers, *en règle*, and amongst them a paper of instructions * printed on very bad paper, in equally bad English, which we put into the hands of the

* FORMALITIES

TO BE OBSERVED BY FOREIGNERS ON ARRIVING IN RUSSIA AND ON DEPARTING FROM THE EMPIRE.

Every foreigner who arrives in Russia furnished with a Pass-port duly authenticated, ought to present himself, in the chief town of the first government on his road, before the Civile Governor, in order to deliver to him his Pass-port and get a licket for his journey, that he may be able to prosecute the same into the interior of the empire; this licket must be renewed in every Governmenthown through which he passes on his poad, and on his arrival at the place of his destination he ought again to present himself before the respectiye Civil Governor, in order to have this licket exchanged for a permission of residence. In both the Metropoli-es of the Empire, viz. Mosco and St. Peters-burg, his permission or licket of residence is to be obtained at the Address-Office for Foreigners *(Bureau d'adresse pour les etrangers.)*

Every foreigner who wishes to leave Russia ought to present a petition to that effect to the Military Governor, Governor General or Civil-Governor, accompanied with a certificate from the policeethat ther, is no legal impediment to his leaving the Empire; besides he muse advertise his intended departure in he resides. After having observed these formalities the foreigner receives his Pass-port withou delay; and in case of necessity he can also obtain the Pass-port with which he cressed the frontiers of the Empire. The Pass-ports for depar-ture delivered to foreigners in the governments on the frontiers are valid for the term of three weeks, and those from the govern-ments of the interior for themonths. After the lapse of this term these Pass-ports must be revised by the Governor in order to enable the foreigner to pass the frontiers of the Empire.

printer as an encouragement for him to keep his superiority over the Russian press, and to show our readers the difficulties under which the literary productions of the Russian government are produced; probably if a few more books and newspapers were admitted, the orthography of their officials might be improved.

Having now obtained permission to spend our time in the country, and paid for it pretty well, we proceeded to make use of it by driving through the town, and were decidedly satisfied with our purchase, for although it is beyond our power just now to do justice to our impressions, we can, at least, say that we were surprised with the magnitude of everything in proportion to similar things at home. Size or extent seemed a grand aim. Streets, houses and public buildings, were wider and more magnificent than those of any capital we had seen, taking them as a whole, and, at least, one of the bridges certainly as fine as any in Europe, which we had ample opportunity of admiring, as we were fortunate enough to get a room looking out upon the Neva, near the place where it crosses; we were sufficiently tired on reaching home to be glad that we were there.

CHAP. XX.

Next morning we found ourselves so far restored to our natural state as to be up for breakfast in decent time, and having in some degree lost the overwhelming curiosity which had engrossed our attention the day before, turned our thoughts to the companion of our previous troubles, the poor carriage, whose bodily condition turned out to be in such a perilous state when the mud was taken off it that we were compelled to seek professional advice, and consigned it to the hands of an able practitioner in that way, who promised to cure all ailments, restore all lost parts, repair bruises, and return the patient restored to its original strength of constitution. The remainder of the day we spent in miscellaneous wanderings, partly effected by means of those extraordinary public vehicles the *droskies*, and when exhausted by riding took to our own feet; but as night drew

on we got tired of this in its turn and desired to return to the riding again, but there were some difficulties that suddenly presented themselves; first, we were far from home and had lost our way; secondly, we did not know well how to ask for assistance, either for information or for a carriage. But necessity is a strong driver and I at last summoned courage to venture on my first Russian speech in the Russian capital, which was to the effect that the droshky driver *(Istvostchik)*, whom I addressed, must drive us to Miss Benson's boarding house, on the English quay, which was our home; but as he took no more notice of me than if I had been a parrot, I repeated my phrase with a stronger accent of impatience but really a little mixed with fear and misgiving, he pointed to his vehicle and muttered "*Snaiu, snaiu,*" which of course, was worse than Greek to me; but it turned out afterwards to mean "I understand," and so he did, for we to our great joy found ourselves soon safely at home, and were so far emboldened by this success that I was never afterwards afraid of putting into immediate practice any bit of the language that I picked up. The next day being our last before leaving

for Moscow the greater part of it had to be spent in obtaining our passport, which was a process in every respect similar to the one we had already gone through with our *cartes de séjour;* and, notwithstanding the politeness of the officer and our appreciation of his wonderful memory, (for he remembered all about us this time,) we felt it to be a great tax upon our patience to spend several hours in going through ten minutes' formality and a walk of a few yards from one office to another. What remained of the day was spent in driving through the town and visiting the islands which are a portion of it; but as this only formed part of our general survey which was continued on our return from Moscow we must reserve a more detailed description of it until then, as it involves so many particulars which depend one upon the other that to divide them would only be to destroy their strength.

We rose the next day in renewed excitement at the prospect of seeing something new and of so much interest as the venerable dowager capital of the empire; and it was no slight addition to our pleasure to remember that this time we could travel by railway. No fear of

bad post houses or broken bolts, but the smooth running of the train and civility of officials instead of the corduroy roads and stupid *yamstchicks.*

Before granting us tickets our passports were examined and found correct, and at eleven o'clock in the morning we took our seats for *Moscow* in one of the long American carriages, which are comfortable, and built like roomy saloons. Our *compagnons de voyage,* seemed to have quite as acute perceptions of the risk of their undertaking as an Englishman who takes his ticket for insurance against accidents, for they all crossed themselves three times, and were apparently repeating some form of prayer mentally the moment the train started. We found, however, that we were well provided for an accident, as we had a surgeon and a Russian priest with us, and we learned that they were the usual accompaniments to each train.

This railway belongs to the Russian government, and at this time was the only line in the empire, with the exception of a short one to *Tzarsko-Selo,* sixteen miles from St. Petersburg, and *another at Balaclava.* But the management of it has been let to an American company, who

find engines and carriages, and evidently manage it to please themselves; as we learned that in their negotiation with the late emperor Jonathan had, in Yankee phrase, got "the best end of a bad bargain." After about four hours' riding we crossed the river *Volkhov*, which flows from lake *Ilmen* to lake *Ladoga*, passing through *Novgorod*, the most ancient capital of Russia, and celebrated in all its annals as the *great Novgorod*. Previous to the transfer of its dignity and treasures to Moscow, by Ivan the Third, it numbered not less than four hundred thousand inhabitants, but now, in its deposed condition, but fifteen thousand. For some time after this we passed through an uninteresting country, badly cultivated, and but scantily covered with vegetation. Just before stopping at Tver, we crossed the mighty *Volga* by a stupendous bridge, and immediately afterwards came to the station, which is large and commodious, with a spacious platform and good refreshment room, where *Tchai* is the chief commodity, for taking which ten minutes are allowed at most of the stations, but here we had twenty, and tried to make use of them, but our desires being so much greater than our power of expressing them, we

came but poorly off, and it was only by perseverance and doing a great deal for ourselves that we got served at all. On issuing from the refreshment room to the platform, we found it crowded with our fellow-travellers, who, from their superior activity, finished their tea quicker, and had time to enjoy a cigar, or rather cigars, for there were hundreds of them; everybody smoked, ladies, as well as gentlemen, and the universal sparkle of so many moving stars had a peculiar effect to people who are only accustomed at the station to see "no smoking allowed." Presently a bell rings, but no one takes any notice, and it is only at the third bell that the brilliant constellations begin to move in fiery streams towards their respective carriages, at the doors of which there are already loitering a porter or two, with a willing hand, ready to receive the half-burnt cheroot which each lady takes from her lips and gracefully drops into his fingers.

At nine o'clock next morning we arrived at the station in Moscow, having been twenty-two hours on the journey, and travelled a distance of four hundred English miles. Our education by this time was so far completed

that we could manage to call a droshky without risk of much trouble, aud having been recommended to an hotel kept by a Swiss, M. Chollet, in the *Bolshaioa Loubianka Varsonofievskoy Pereolok,* we drove there at once, got a good apartment, and were comfortable. Having rested pretty well in the train, we did not require to go to bed, but took breakfast, performed our ablutions, mounted a droshky, and drove at once to the Kremlin, passing through the *Kitai-Gorod,* or Chinese Town, and had not been two hours in Moscow before we found ourselves standing on the top of the famous *Ivan Valeki* Tower, two hundred and seventy feet above the ground, with a gilded dome over our heads. The view we had from this position surpassed everything we had ever experienced; the bright sun reflecting on the gilded cupolas, and spires sparkling in a clear atmosphere, the transparency of which was beyond description, presented a *coup d'œil* difficult to realize, appearing more like a fairy panorama than any reality of earthly material, the surrounding plain stretching out beyond, with the Moscwa winding through it, and every turn visible. Hundreds of churches glittered

with their gilded domes, Tartar battlements, terraces, Gothic steeples, Grecian columns, palaces, Tartar temples, pagodas and mosques of every description, wakened up a flood of associations such as can scarcely be called to life upon any other spot on earth.

This was indeed a sight never to be forgotten, and we descended, with regret, to more intimate acquaintance, lest we might find something within less worthy of our admiration. However, on reaching the bottom of the tower, we wandered in amazement amongst the wonders within the walls of the Kremlin, which was formerly the old fortress of the Tartars, and now held sacred by the Russians, as containing their most valued shrines and relics. Altogether, we were in a state of intense excitement, and longing for an opportunity to make a complete survey, determined to lose no time next day. Now, however, we were compelled to return to our Swiss domicile, and conclude this day with recruiting our energies for the next.

CHAP. XXI.

Our first step towards making the best of our opportunities, was to engage a *"valet de place,"* who was a necessary accompaniment to our operation of sight seeing.

In order to convey a tolerable idea of the situation of Moscow, we may say that its position on the river Moscwa in some degree resembles that of London on the Thames. The stream flows through it in the same direction, and makes almost the same bends, the principal form being that of a bow, with a curve northwards. To carry out the simile, most of the remarkable buildings are on the north side, and the great Kremlin corresponds in situation to the Houses of Parliament, having also a bridge at the same place. The Foundling Hospital would be Somerset House; and further down the stream we come to the St. Saviour's Convent, instead of the Tower. The London Docks

are occupied by the Powder Magazines, and strangely enough the Railway Station from St. Petersburg corresponds with Euston Square terminus. There is, however, a difference in the levels of these places, which destroys our parallel in that respect, as the Kremlin stands upon a hill rising abruptly from the river in a way that would materially improve our Houses of Parliament, indeed the greater portion of the town stands upon undulating ground. The river is a tributary of the Volga, and is navigable to Moscow.

The whole town occupies an area of about twenty five square miles, surrounded by an embankment of earthwork, upwards of twenty miles in length, enclosing a population of three hundred and eighty thousand people, who are, however, very irregularly distributed; in the centre they are densely packed, towards the north moderately so, but in the south and all around within the embankment there is a considerable quantity of unoccupied ground. Within this enclosure a circular Boulevard encompasses the town, and within this again is another, both being planted with rows of trees and shrubs. These circles have the

Kremlin as a centre, the outer one being at a distance of a mile and a half, whilst the inner one is at a distance of a mile, and not quite complete; it is stopped at the river, and not continued on the south side, as the outer one is, and therefore only forms a ring of about three fourths of a circle. This encloses the principal part of the town. On the east side of the Kremlin is a part of the city called the *Kitai Gorod,* or Chinese Town, enclosed by high embattled walls, with buttresses and watch towers. Within this enclosure are the *Gostinnoi Dvor* and the *Riadi.* Between the Kitai Gorod and the Kremlin wall is the *Krasnoi Plocshad,* or Red Place.

On the opposite side of the Kremlin, and belonging to it, there is an ornamental garden, well laid out, and called after the Emperor Alexander. The Moscovians seem to be fond of gardening, for the banks of their river, as well as the Boulevards, are all nicely planted, and before many houses in almost all parts of the town a little plot is laid out with flowers and shrubs, whose short existence but scantily repays the attention they must receive in this chilly region. The old houses of Moscow are

chiefly small, and of wood, painted yellow, whilst the new ones are of plastered brick, having iron roofs, painted green. These are indiscriminately mixed throughout the town, and the quaint proximity of novelty and antiquity which presents itself in every street, although destroying all idea of regularity, adds greatly to the picturesque. The moment your admiration has been excited by a wide street of noble edifices, you find its width suddenly diminish to that of an alley, plunging down hill into a nest of little yellow wooden stalls, to emerge again amongst a row of respectable villas, with perhaps a palatial looking mansion or a classic public building towering amongst them. The prince and the cobbler appear to live harmoniously together here, and each one seems to be allowed to indulge his independent taste. The cobbler, however, is more suited to the state of the pavement upon which he has to walk, as he can repair his own shoes, an operation which must be very frequently necessary, for the state of the streets throughout the city is by no means what one would expect from the magnificence of the buildings, as they are paved with large round boulders, which are

allowed to take care of themselves after being once put down.

The better class of inhabitants, who can afford to hire a droshky, fare much worse than the poor cobbler, for the construction of this vehicle does nothing to counteract the inevitable bumping which the rapid pace produces. The droshky is the only public conveyance equivalent to our cars or cabs, but a very sorry substitute, as it consists of nothing more than a knife board on four small wheels, across which the traveller must mount astride, and the driver sits in front, also astride, without any other attempt at a driving box than the end of the seat upon which you are perched. If you use one of these affairs, of course you are presumed to have some desire to remain upon it until the end of your journey, but unless you embrace your driver pretty closely, and hold yourself fast, this will be found almost impossible.

As the Kremlin is the chief object of interest in Moscow, we shall give it our first attention, and for that purpose return to the Krasnoi Plocshad, and enter the Kremlin by the *Spass Vorata,* or Holy Gate. This gate is the

principal one of five in the walls surrounding the Kremlin, and is specially remarkable for the sanctity in which it is held. It is not known to what this respect owes its origin, but numerous traditions are current of miracles believed to have been wrought by a little picture over the gateway. This is supposed to be an "Ecce Homo," but so black with age that we could make nothing out of it. Before it is suspended a lamp, kept continually burning. The gateway is surmounted by a large tower built in the wall, of about forty feet square, and perhaps eighty high, having numerous pinnacles around its top. From this a spire of some pretension rises, with a clock face on each of the four sides, and in front of the tower projects a building of half its height, more like a huge sentry box than anything else, having a low gable towards the square, with an arch under it, supported on stone pillars. Under this arch hangs the picture, and under the picture is the holy gateway, passing through under both building and tower, forming a tunnel of sixty feet long, and wide enough for an ordinary vehicle. The whole of the passage is considered sacred, much to the discomfort of those who

pass under it, for no male person is allowed to go through without uncovering his head, and to enforce this homage a sentinel is always in attendance with his bayonet fixed, and as there was usually a crowd in it during our visits the effect of remaining uncovered in the cold draught for so long a time as was necessary to creep through the whole length was highly injurious. A man inside was selling candles to devout persons and others who wished to burn them in passing through the arch, or to the saints in the churches within the walls. There is no distinction of persons in the obeisance exacted by this little picture, for we have seen nobles in their splendid carriages driving up at a furious speed, suddenly slackened on approaching, in order that the driver and the driven might each take off their hats and reverently cross themselves; this they do repeatedly until they have passed entirely through, and we were assured that no exception is made, even for the Emperor himself.

CHAP. XXII.

Passing from this gate to the *Sabernoi* Plocshad, and crossing to the south-east corner, we reached a space, enclosed by a lofty iron railing, containing three of the principal churches: the *Uspenski Sabor*, or Cathedral of the Assumption; the *Arckangelski Sabor*, or Church of St. Michael, and a warlike looking little church, whose construction seems intended for resistance rather than peaceful devotion, the walls being several yards thick, whilst the interior of the edifice is scarcely more in width. This is said to have been built before Moscow was thought of, and seems likely to be in existence when Moscow is forgotten. We stood for some time gazing in admiration, with our eyes very wide open, and, like other people with too much choice, we lost some time in making a selection. Ultimately, we determined to commence with the Uspenski Sabor, as it is the

one in which the Czars are crowned, and, consequently, of most importance.

The word cathedral in English conveys the idea of a large and venerable building, with a solemn, spacious interior, but when translated into Russian, it means a heavily-built, grotesque edifice, of nothing more than ordinary size, with the solemnity of effect inside entirely overpowered by splendour. The usual plan is that of a Greek cross, crowned with cupolas, but this church shows no signs of such an arrangement, the general interior being of a simple oblong form, having a screen in the usual place, and surmounted by five cupolas, supported upon heavy pillars, the whole of which, as well as the walls, are covered with gold, not ordinary gold leaf, but in most cases of such a thickness as rendered it an object of considerable interest to the spoilers who formerly visited the city, with less peaceful intentions than ours. Upon this groundwork are painted upwards of three thousand figures, if we may believe the account of their number which we received, for we certainly did not count them ourselves, but are quite certain that they are very numerous, and very grotesque.

They are generally said to be frescoes, but we cannot think so, as they are executed in most cases upon the metal, and have not a genuine fresco appearance. They are supposed to be portraits of saints, martyrs and Greek historians, painted, in some instances, on a most exaggerated scale; there has been, however, considerable discretion used in completing them, for the example of that artist who wrote on his pictures "this is a dog" "this is a horse" has been followed, and, to prevent mistakes, each production is labelled with a name, serving as an indication of the direction in which your imagination is intended to be led; for, as the the whole surface of the sacred effigies are covered with reverend dirt, there is unlimited latitude for the exercise of ideality. The illumination of this exhibition is effected by a massive chandelier, of solid silver, all in one piece, which hangs from the centre of the roof, has candelabra for forty-eight lights, and weighs, it is said, three thousand pounds.

On one side of this part of the church is the throne of Valdimir the Great—a dark coloured wooden seat, enclosed in a chamber of brass, which is said to be an imitation of the tomb of

Christ; within this enclosure there is also a picture, whose sacred character has given it great importance in the eyes of the people, and, as we were informed, its miraculous powers had performed many wonderful cures; in fact, its ability in this way had given it quite a professional reputation.

On the opposite side there is a silver shrine, containing the mummy of a saint, whose muslin robe seemed to be in very good condition, with the exception of an intentional hole, of about three inches in diameter, made in the side, through which the reverential Russians imbibe the sanctity of the relic by a deferential kiss.

There are many more precious relics in this building, which, from their superior sanctity, are treasured within the sanctuary, a portion of the edifice separated from the body of the church by a screen. This *Iconastos* appears to be one sheet of gold and silver, finely worked into Byzantine devices. There is a small door in it, on passing through which the first object presenting itself is a silver shrine, standing against the wall, containing one of those bits of metal so frequently met with in continental churches, which, notwithstanding the difficulty

arising from their number, are in each case most confidently and solemnly presented to us as true nails of the Cross; with this there is appropriately placed a garment of our Saviour, and another said to have been worn by the Virgin; of this there is only a portion remaining. To compensate for the deficiency, however, a portrait of her is preserved, which is affirmed to be a genuine work of the evangelist St. Luke, and represents a golden lady, with a painted face. Whatever it may have originally been, her complexion is now decidedly dark, indeed, almost black, standing in bold relief upon her brilliant body. Near this is another, and more highly esteemed, relic, enclosed within a shrine of solid gold. This is the body of the celebrated patriarch Nicon, which is enveloped in muslin, covered with stars of gold, diamonds and other precious stones. Here, again, a portion of the withered flesh is bared, but this time it is the lips presenting themselves, black and shrivelled, through a small hole in the wrapping.

All these relics are highly venerated by the whole nation, and it is one of the greatest desires of Russian devotees to visit Moscow, and press their lips to those of this antiquated

curiosity, a treat which they have few opportunities of enjoying; for it is only on great festivals, or by means of a heavy fee to the priest, that the shrine is opened. We were fortunate in being present on one of those occasions, when the covers were raised, as we not only witnessed others enjoying this operation, but had an opportunity of doing so ourselves, had we been so disposed; for we were included in a crowd that made a desperate rush at the body the moment it was exposed, devoutly kneeling down, kissing the mummy, and, after rising up, kissing also the hand of the priest, and then going away apparently much gratified.

Before leaving, we saw service performed in this church. The Bishop of Moscow officiated, assisted by thirteen priests of different grades, one of whom walked up to him frequently during the service, and removed the mitre from his head for a few moments. The music was entirely vocal, and probably the best we had heard. The singers were all men, standing upon a raised platform in front of the screen, and surrounded by a brass railing. They were dressed in a most unecclesiastical uniform of blue coats and bright buttons. This church was

completely stripped of its gold and silver ornaments by the French, in 1812, but has been since restored to its original grandeur. We next went to the Arckangelski Sabor, which is also gorgeously decorated with gold and jewels; but the windows are too small to shew it with proper effect. The greater portion of the screen here is one sheet of pure gold. The tombs of all the czars previous to Peter the Great are in this church, and are literally whitened sepulchres, being built of bricks, painted and covered with velvet palls, forming sarcophagi, upon which are the names of their occupants, the date of their birth and death. There is here the skeleton of the child Demetri, of great note in Russian history. It is magnificently dressed, with the face bare, which is kissed by thousands of the faithful every time the shrine is opened. We then passed on to the Church of the Annunciation, where there are a great number of saints and relics. Here is also the royal seat of the czars, made of wood, and covered with silver gilt. The floor of this church is paved with pebbles of all shapes and sizes, cornelians, agate, jasper, and many other valuable stones. There is also on the walls a remarkable fresco, as it

contains the portraits of personages anything but saintly. The subject appears to be either a festival or a war, carried on by the forces of his Satanic Majesty, and headed by himself in person—rather an unusual spectacle in a place of worship. We next retraced our steps to the *Uspenski Sabor*, near which we entered the *Synodalni Dom*. It contains a library of ancient books, which are kept in cupboards within the church attached to it.

The holy oil, which plays such an important part in Russian baptisms, is manufactured here with great ceremony, every article of the menage being of silver. The process is one that requires considerable time for perfection, as the raw material is only Florence oil and spices. There is, however, an infusion of sanctity instilled into it by the addition of a few drops of oil from a flask, which is said to have belonged to the Magdalena who anointed the feet of our Saviour. The whole quantity prepared at once does not exceed three or four gallons, but is sufficient, however, to serve all the children in Russia for nearly two years, as it is distributed only in small quantities to the bishop of each district, who merely dips a camel-hair pencil into it, and

touches the organs of the five senses of each infant, together with his fingers and toes, in order that each may perform its functions in an orthodox manner.

On leaving here we went to see that celebrated lion of Moscow, the great bell, which we found sitting quietly enough upon a granite couch constructed especially for it at the foot of the Ivan Valeki tower. It is a very respectable looking bell, nicely shaped, and if it was not for an ugly hole in its side of nearly a yard in diameter, it would probably be a very useful bell; now, however, it is only moderately ornamental. The height is twenty-one feet four inches, the circumference sixty-seven feet four inches, and the thickness of the metal, according to my husband's careful measurement, was twenty-three inches. It weighs nearly two hundred tons, and the clapper is fourteen feet long.

A bell with such a tongue could only have been the work of a woman, and we accordingly believe the account which says that it was cast in 1730, by order of the Empress Anne, at a cost which must in those days have been immense, if we suppose only one-sixth of the material to be silver, and the remainder copper,

computed at present prices, the value would be three hundred and seventy eight thousand pounds sterling. This, we have every reason to believe, is below the mark, as the excitement of the people is said to have been so great at the time it was cast that they threw in gold and silver vessels in abundance as offerings. This they may have been induced to do from the prevailing belief in Russia that a bell is an acceptable offering. They have, therefore, a great taste for them, and esteem the piety of the donors according to the value of the gift. The Empress Anne must, therefore, be considered the most devout woman who ever lived, for there is no bell in the world to equal this one.

We have already mentioned the Ivan Valeki tower, as the one from which we obtained our first view of the city. And now, speaking of bells, we may mention that there are between thirty and forty, of various sizes, hung within it. They are arranged so that they gradually diminish in size, the smallest one being the highest, and are all hung in the Russian manner, that is, the bells are immovable, and the tongues loose. In England and other places

it is usual to swing the bell, and the tongue hanging loose strikes against the sides. The labour of moving our bells is comparatively trifling, but in Russia it would be almost impracticable, as most of them are of immense size; for instance, the smallest bell of the Ivan Valeki weighs upwards of three tons, whilst the large one is so much as sixty-four tons, a weight certainly small when compared with the great one just described, but sufficient to furnish metal for all the churches of an ordinary English town.

CHAP. XXIII.

There are within the Kremlin three palaces of considerable pretensions. The largest, called the Bolshoi Dvoretz, was destroyed by fire in 1812, but has been rebuilt and restored by the Emperor Alexander. Its associations are, consequently, comparatively modern, and the style of its architecture very discordant with the antiquity around. One of the other palaces is particularly worthy of note, as that in which the Emperor takes his first seat upon the throne after coronation. In their immediate neighbourhood is a large pile of building called the Senate, arranged in a triangular form, the three sides of which are respectively occupied by the Public Offices, Treasury and Arsenal. The Public Offices are, of course, sufficiently explained by the name, but the Treasury derives its interest from the nature of its contents, which are, as it were, the heart strings of the

Russian Empire, bearing the same relation to their nationality as the Tower of London does to ours, but without its association of agony and terror that mingle so much pain with our admiration.

The Russian name for this place is *Orovjie Palast*, and its chief treasures consist of mementoes of their various sovereigns, and the regalia not only of Russia, as it is now in its full-grown dignity as a mighty empire, but the seeds from which it sprung—the crowns of conquered kingdoms, who were proud enough of their independence which, having once lost, they have now forgotten.

The usual difficulty regarding our permission to view these sights occurred here, and was overcome in the usual way, but as we forget the exact number of roubles, our experience is lost for the benefit of future travellers. In the vestibule we found several well executed busts of the most celebrated Russian peers.

On the ground floor there is another collection of mementoes of deceased nobility, in the form of four wheeled and no wheeled royal vehicles, looking like great megatheriums of almost antideluvian date. These conveyances

are of the most clumsy order of architecture, as the coach builders of those days did not seem to have so much faith in the strength of their materials as they have now. What they want in grace and lightness is made up in decoration. Decoration, however, does not by any means always mean ornament, for, although they are as highly gilded and carved as the state carriage of our own dear monarch, or that of her faithful servant, the lord mayor, they still present all the tawdry and absurd appearance common to both.

Some of the better sort have windows of talc, a substance which, before the introduction of glass, was extensively used in Russia for windows, as it is even now in distant parts where the iron ramifications of commerce have not yet reached; the primitive nature of their construction may be inferred from the fact that we saw whole fir trees in them as axles. Amongst these interesting relics is a large roomy sledge, which was the means of conveyance used by the Empress Elizabeth between this place and St. Petersburg.

We have already mentioned that Novgorod, the dowager capital of Russia, was originally

supplanted by Moscow, and we had here an opportunity of making a few reflections on the fact that men are often as easily conquered by their own feelings as by the edge of the sword, for, in this building stands the alarm bell of Novgorod, upon the existence of which, like the queen bee of a hive, depended the whole prosperity of the ancient city, the affections of the citizens were centred in it, and when their bell was lost, broken spirited and downcast, they allowed their downfall to come upon them unresisted. All the most interesting of the treasures in this place partake of this melancholy character; it seemed when in the midst of them as though Russia was built upon ruins, and we were looking into the secret recesses of its foundation.

Here are the keys of Samosk and Warsaw, and the constitution of Poland, a deed whose words are obliterated by blood, which can only be washed off by more. It was scarcely possible to look upon the Polish throne, and its sceptre lying *broken* near it, without some little feeling for that patriotic people.

The number of crowns exhibited here would lead one to suppose that Russia played with

kingdoms as boys do with marbles. Upon handsome plush tables are ranged the diadems of Astrachan, Siberia, Novgorod, Kazan, Moscow, Poland, the Crimea, and many others of successive czars and czarinas. The series, commencing with the earliest date of Russian royalty, and finishing with that whose existence had only just commenced, indeed the crowns we saw upon the last pedestal were almost warm from the brows of the new monarchs. The collection of crowns, thrones and other relics contained here are all of them covered with jewels in profusion. The most remarkable setting for diamonds is, however, presented in a coarse wooden chair, which is the national throne for coronations, analagous to our old wooden chair in Westminster Abbey, with the ancient stone under it; in this case, however, the stones are on the chair, and more numerous, for it is covered with thousands of diamonds like drops of dew on a garden seat, and were it not for minute inspection they might be easily overlooked. There is also a seat of similar character for the empress, but not quite so much decorated. The detailed numbers of jewels in each of the relics are stated to be

immense, but as we cannot think it interesting to trouble our readers with them, we have taken the pains to put them into a total, and find that there can be satisfactorily accounted for, fourteen thousand three hundred and sixty four diamonds, three thousand nine hundred and eighty torquoises, and other jewels in proportion. One of the diamonds is of immense size, and forms a sort of brooch, which was worn on the breast of the Empress Catherine's *horse,* whose trappings are all here, including a man's saddle, upon which she used to sit in the costume of her guards.

The memorials of Peter the Great are exceedingly interesting, as his old worn out costume, his books, and many little things constructed by himself are all religiously preserved. There are also many garments and other relics of ancient royalty, but they can only be made interesting from an intimate knowledge of their possessors.

The armoury is a fine collection of weapons, tastefully arranged, but had not sufficient attraction to induce us to bestow more attention upon it than was sufficient to observe the tasteful forms in which the arms were arranged, and

the more remarkable weapons of remarkable people. In the square outside, however, there are arms of a more dignified character, cannons by hundreds,* trophies taken in war, and one that could scarcely be taken at all anywhere, for it is said to be the largest gun in the world, being three feet diameter inside, and more than five yards long. It is said to carry a ball of four thousand three hundred and twenty pounds; unfortunately I do not know if any one ever had the courage to fire it off.

There are within this remarkable enclosure also nunneries, monasteries and schools, the latter intended entirely for religious training. In the course of our peregrinations we wandered into the church attached to the *Sa Ikono Spass Koi*, a convent of considerable importance, where we fortunately witnessed part of an interesting ceremony. Two children were receiving their first sacrament, and the little things went through the formalities with great dexterity. We have already mentioned the curious salaam which the Russians make in their devotions, touching the ground with the top of their heads by merely bending downwards. The flexibility

* Upwards of nine hundred.

of these young backs no doubt did a great deal to assist them in performing this task easily. We were, however, much astonished to see the nuns themselves do the same thing, not only with equal ease, but under more difficult circumstances; for the head dress they wear is a tall black cone, as high as a sugar loaf, and quite as ugly. When we first saw them commence this movement we of course expected to see these things drop off at once, but they did not, and were evidently used to it; for they never stirred during several repetitions of the process. The nuns were dressed in black entirely; and one of them, on leaving the church, seeing that we were strangers, kindly invited us into the nunnery, and exhibited a number of beautiful specimens of needlework, executed by the sisters themselves, in the same style as the gold embroidery of Kazan, evidently intended for ecclesiastical decorations. This enabled us to improve our acquaintance; but, much to our mutual regret, neither of us could understand what the other said, and of course we had to depend entirely upon the efforts of our valet. This did not, however, prevent us becoming excellent friends; and, as an especial mark of

favour, our hostess kindly offered me a glass of holy water, which had been blessed by the bishop. I took it gratefully, but could not perceive any difference from the element in the ordinary state.

We afterwards went to the *Tshudoff* monastery, a large building containing a great number of monks, who received us kindly and shewed us the apartments, which contained little of interest to us excepting some tolerable pictures, to which we had not time to devote as much attention as they probably deserved.

Having now described the principal objects of interest within the Kremlin, and as we entered by the most Holy Gate, we pass out by the one next in degree of sanctity, which is called *Iverskaia Boshia Mater,* or gate of the Iberian Mother, which stands near the west end of the *Krasnoi Ploschad,* directly in the tract of the greatest thoroughfares of Moscow. The main features of this portal are two wide arches through the thickness of the Kremlin wall, each nearly as large as the one through which we first entered it. In the pillar between these arches, and on the outside, a small chapel is formed; the intense sanctity attracts con-

stantly a crowd of worshippers, whose reverence is chiefly directed towards a miraculous picture of the Virgin and Infant, which is placed at the far end of the chapel, whose reputation as a worker of wonders almost exceeds that of the one previously mentioned at the *spass vorata;* no one, of whatever station of life, prince or mujik, thinks of passing without, at least, a genuflexion, but more generally a short time is spent in fervent devotion, and we believe that it was one of the most affecting sights of the ceremonies attendant upon the coronation when the Emperor and Empress alighted here to pay their homage.

The object of all this veneration appears to belong to the same family as that in the Cathedral of the Assumption, and to have been heiress to all the property, for it is loaded with jewels and gold, nothing but the black face and hands being visible. It also keeps a carriage and four, similar to the Bambino, at Rome, in which it is taken with great ceremony to see patients, whose fees are a prolific source of revenue to the monks. On these occasions it leaves a deputy at home to receive all the attentions of the faithful, and we understand that so

well has the latter fulfilled its duties, that there is considerable difficulty in discerning which is the most powerful of the two, a point which the monks make no effort to settle. It is said that the miraculous nature of this picture was first discovered in ancient times by a wicked Tartar, who irreverently pierced the virgin's cheek with his sword, upon which blood flowed from the wound, and if the presence of an effect is proof of the cause, the story may be a fact, for the wound is certainly there.

CHAP. XXIV.

The finest view of the Kremlin is obtained from the south side; we, therefore, made it our business to go there, taking our station on the opposite bank of the river, in which the reflection of the glittering domes and painted walls gave the whole an aspect perfectly fairy like. The perpendicular rocks rising abruptly from the water, and crowned with the clustered magnificence of this wonderful place, certainly produces the most extraordinary picture that we have ever been fortunate enough to witness. In this mass of grandeur, and forming, as it were, a finial for the whole, stands the great Ivan Valeki, with his golden head towering high above everything around; on the right the perspective is lost in the hundred domes and gilded pinnacles of other churches falling away with distance in a tapering finish for the view, whilst on the left the Kremlin is as it

were suddenly cut off, and the remainder of the panorama becomes a lovely garden, which stretches away behind its walls on the west side until it meets the Krasnoi Ploschad at its most northern extremity, the latter extending down the east side back again towards the river, thus forming two sides of a triangle, of which the river is the base. We wondered what could have possessed the Empress Catherine to propose covering the whole space with one roof. There is a model of her intended scheme in the Treasury, but it has no other merit, in our eyes, than that of tremendous extent, and after having seen the Kremlin from this point, we felt convinced that there was only one Kremlin in the world, and rejoiced that she had not spoiled it.

In the Krasnoi Ploschad, and crowning a small precipice which falls away from it, stands a remarkable edifice known by the name of the Calico Church; in Russian it is called *Vassili Blagernoi*, or Basil Blazan. It is doubtful whether it is more remarkable for its grotesque appearance, or from the fact that instead of being one church it is a bundle of churches, perhaps twenty, each of which has its own altar

and complete paraphernalia for service, and betrays its individuality by exhibiting a painted dome outside. A number of decanters and match boxes placed close together, and crowned with a sufficient number of inverted pegtops would give a tolerably fair idea of the appearance of this building, with the exception of colour, which is its most remarkable feature. Every dome is quite different from its neighbour; all the resources of gold, colour, and variety of forms have been exhausted in beautifying this place, and certainly the effect produced is one of surpassing splendour. It is not well decided what was the origin of such a curious idea as to cluster so many chapels together, but it is said that the founder was Ivan the Terrible, and that the architect's eyes were put out when the work was completed, in order that he might not make another like it; the same story is, however, told of other works, the great clock at Strasbourg for instance, and we hope that in such cases the authenticity of the evidence is by no means increased by the multiplication of instances. Within the chapels there are many things to be seen; several large and unprepossessing pictures upon the walls,

relics of departed saints and other curiosities, but the difficulty of seeing all, to say nothing of describing them, may be inferred from the fact that the lowest computation accredited for the number of chapels in Moscow is nearly a thousand, besides an immense number of miniature altars in niches by the way side, each having a lamp before it, and in some cases large enough to become almost worthy of the name of chapel.

Those in the Basil Blazan are exceedingly small and of great height. One, "The Church of the Protection of Mary," is a hundred and fifty feet high; others are so crowded with holy vessels that the number of worshippers would have to be exceedingly limited.

The gorgeous aspect of the whole externally is beyond description. The domes are Moorish, and the general character of the whole is decidedly Eastern, but one would think even exceeding the brilliancy of the Turkish mosques.

There is a fine bronze monument in the Ploschad to commemorate the expulsion of the Poles from Moscow, in the early part of the seventeenth century, by Minim and Pojarski—the one a patriot and the other a general. The

bronze represents them both, and stands upon a pedestal about the centre of the north side of the square and in front of the *Gostinnoi Dvor*, a remarkable collection of buildings, having a handsome façade towards the square, with Corinthian columns and steps. This is one of the most interesting features of a Russian town as it betrays a peculiarity which we do not meet with in Western Europe. The place is a market, but one which combines the miscellaneous character of a bazaar with the utility and importance of a warehouse. A Russian can satisfy all his requirements, either of food, raiment, or decoration, without leaving the place. The magnitude of this one in particular may be inferred from the fact that there are upwards of one thousand wholesale merchants, and six thousand retail shops congregated into one vast commercial locality, forming part of what was once the old Tartar quarter of the city, and is now known by the name of *Kitai Gorod*, or Chinese city.

To Moscow, on account of its central position, the treasures of both European and Asiatic Russia are brought in equal plenty—we say brought because they really are not sent—the

people of all the provinces come with them, and within ten paces of each other you may find the fur-clad Siberian and the gay Persian, Western Jew and Eastern Tartar, all making one vast happy family, held together by that universal civilizer—trade.

The wholesale business is chiefly carried on in buildings of three storeys high, occupying that portion nearest the square. Through this stack of edifices access can be obtained at several points to the more humble and more numerous retail shops, behind which they are arranged in square blocks of one storey, having narrow passages at right angles running between them. At intervals a roof is carried over these alleys, under which pictures of Saint Nicholas, the patron saint, are suspended, with a lamp hung before him, to whom the tradesmen offer their devotions, both on opening and closing their booths. In no part of Moscow did I find so much to interest me as in the immense variety and curious novelty of the wares to be met with in these places. The varied costumes of the vendors, and their incessant clamouring for patronage, kept up a continued excitement. The shops in which each particular class of

goods is sold are, as a general rule, kept together, so that for any particular article you may chose from twenty or more merchants in one row. One sort of merchandise particularly attracted our attention, as it consisted of a wholesale stock of saints, in all the splendour of silver gilt glare and tinsel costume. This, no doubt, arises from the great sanctity of the city itself, which is to the Russians what Mecca is to the Mahomedans. As an appropriate memento we brought one of them away with us, and she lies peacefully enough among a host of relics from less holy places.

Among other remarkable things I also purchased a talisman, a torquoise with a verse of the Khoran engraved upon it—rather a curious neighbour for an image of the Virgin. But the multitude of things that can be had here is beyond all expression; beautiful inlaid leather work from Kazan, gold and silver embroidery, furs of all sorts in abundance, and of immense value, all kinds of costume, all kinds of ornament, crystals from Siberia, gems from Persia, one thing from one end of the world, and the next from the other, were here offered for sale by the very men who had perhaps carried them

from their homes, or, at all events, were fellow countrymen with them; and, without the slightest regard to the probable requirement of a passer-by, or consistency with regard to station or sex, would seize upon the unfortunate visitor, and forcing him or her into the shop, insist upon displaying the merits of its contents in a vociferous and elaborate tirade. Another peculiarity is the number of money changers, whose presence, no doubt, is rendered necessary by the variety of coin that must be presented by such a mixture of people. These men are generally Jews, and usually surrounded by immense quantities of coin, which, if it were not for the *honesty* of the Russians, would, no doubt, be a cause of considerable anxiety to the possesser; as it is, he does not trust to that alone, but seems to have greater faith in a good lock and stout iron bar. The Muscovite Christian, however, seems to trust more to the power of his saint, whose image, stamped upon a seal of wax, is his great protection from all depredation; and it is certainly remarkable that very few cases of robbery do occur under these circumstances. We were pleased to observe the devotion of shopkeepers when closing their

booths; the sealing up was done with great ceremony, and the usual gestures and many prayers offered up to the saint suspended over their heads, into whose care they committed their property until the morning. This shutting up had always to be done at sunset, as no fires or lights were allowed within the Gostinnoi Dvor. On the northern side of this block there is also within the walls of the Kitai Gorod a second-hand market, the largest of several of the same kind which are to be found in Moscow. This, however, is remarkable from the extent and variety of its wares. It seems to be the place to which all decayed and dissected articles of costume or art are brought at last, and seems to me more like what girls would call a collection of doll rags than anything else—bits of cloth, tape and ribbon, so small and so shapeless as to offer no opportunity, apparently, of making anything out of them—scraps of fur, old cloaks, and anything, in fact, that has been worn out or pulled to pieces, is here brought to be purchased by the lower classes, of whom a crowd may always be found in an open space adjoining, ready to hire themselves out as servants, in every capacity, upon the usual

terms permitted to serfs. On the east side, and still within the Kitai Gorod, we visited a restaurant, called the *Troitzka Traktir*. To say that this is a celebrated *café* would be a misnomer, and still there is nothing that describes the place so correctly, with the important difference that *tea* is the beverage distributed to thirsty visitors. These Traktirs are the scenes of Russian bargains and gossip. The merchant sits here sucking his tea through a piece of sugar, whilst he cajoles a customer; and the gentleman discusses the topics of the day over a glass of champagne. The poorer people drink tea only in the same house, but in more public rooms; and, so extensive is the establishment, that from the data we obtained, and an estimate made from our own observation, there must be upwards of forty thousand cups of tea drunk in this Traktir every day. This will be less surprising when we recollect that a Russian is peculiarly a tea drinking animal; he will sit half a day over one teapot, whose original supply of tea is never replenished, but water after water is continually refilled into it, even to ten times, until at last the colour is almost undistinguishable. We had opportunities not

only of seeing this, but of taking some ourselves; and the chief novelty of the thing is that it is drunk out of tumblers, occasionally with a piece of lemon in it. The Russian tea is particularly delicate in flavour, and said to be much superior to what we get in England on account of its being brought overland, and thereby avoiding the long sea voyage, which is supposed to be so injurious to the fragrant herb. Whether there is any truth in this explanation we do not venture to say, but the tea is certainly better.

Outside the walls of the Kitai Gorod, and on the east side, adjoining the river, stands the Foundling Hospital, a large and prominent building, which provides for the enormous number of twenty-five thousand children in the course of a year. A tax upon public amusements, and the proceeds of a *mont de piété* attached to it, are the chief sources of its revenues. But there is also a small income derived from parents who deposit a sum of money with the infant when it is left. The only questions asked are, "How old is it?" and "Is it baptised?" A ticket is given to the bearer, and a similar one tied round the child's

neck, which is then, like an umbrella or walking stick, put by in its proper part of the house. Those unfortunates who are brought without either money or friends are in most cases sent out by dozens into the country to be nursed at the rate of about 4s 6d a month; these children are never claimed, and become inevitably soldiers. But those for whom the deposit has been paid may be seen on producing the ticket issued at their admission; these receive a superior education, and become either officers or members of some profession. The girls are equally well cared for with the boys, and no doubt the institution is the means of saving many a poor infant that would otherwise be left destitute.

There are several large hospitals of the ordinary kinds, but our time did not permit us to examine them. We, however, went to the great riding school, the roof of which has acquired so much celebrity from the fact that it rests entirely on the outer walls of the building, without any columns or internal supports, covering an immense space five hundred and sixty feet long, and two hundred and thirty five wide. The roof is a framework of timber,

apparently supported by immense bows, made up of numerous thin planks of wood notched and bound together, the ends of these bows resting upon walls built on the top of a terrace which runs all round the interior of the place. We believe it is the largest space under an unsupported roof in the world, and some idea may be formed of its size from the fact that it is ten times larger than St. George's Hall, in Liverpool, or six times that of St. Stephen, in Westminster.

When we arrived at this building we found that it had been appropriated as a temporary barracks. A few officers stood around the door, from whom we requested permission to enter, which was at once politely granted, and one of them kindly accompanied us through the building. It was crowded with soldiers, who seemed to be busy cleaning their clothes and getting up their accoutrements. They were placed in rows, and to the best of our calculation there must have been at least twelve thousand men in the room. There was evidently a want of proper ventilation under such crowded circumstances, for, although the roof is fifty feet high, we felt the atmosphere

oppressive, and were by no means sorry to find ourselves again in the open air.

There are within the walls of Moscow many large monasteries and convents, some of them so extensive as to enclose within their painted walls, spacious gardens and plantations of forest trees large enough to deserve the name of a wood. The buildings themselves are remarkable for their magnitude and variety of form, being, like the Kremlin, composed of an amalgamation of towers and cupolas, gilded and painted in true Russian brilliancy. There could probably be no greater contrast to the religious buildings we have just seen than a theatre, and if contrast heightens effect, then we took the right course by next visiting the new opera house in the evening. It is built upon the site of one that was burnt down in 1853, on the north side of the Kitai Gorod, and had only just been completed in time for the coronation festival. In size it ranks amongst the finest in Europe, being nearly as large as La Scala, at Milan, which is only exceeded by San Carlo, at Naples. It will contain two thousand three hundred spectators, and being a modern erection gives more ample accommodation for that number

than other buildings which profess to hold more. There are six tiers of boxes arranged so as to have a little room secluded at the back part by a crimson curtain. There are no columns seen in front of the boxes, which are apparently supported by brackets from behind, a great advantage to a crowded house, as anyone will admit who has sat behind a pillar during some interesting performance, vainly endeavouring to use both eyes at once upon the stage. The decoration is of the most profuse kind, but exceedingly beautiful. The effect of simple white and gold over such a spacious hall is magnificent, and the embellishment is effected with scarcely anything else. There is a splendid box for the Emperor, another for the nobility of the court, and a third for the members of the imperial household; altogether we must say that we were delighted, for the house was crowded with an audience in the gayest attire, a great portion of whom were in the brilliant national uniform, loaded with decorations. The entertainment was good, and evidently appreciated, no doubt some allowance must be made for the festivity of the occasion, but we saw enough to convince us that the

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CHAP. XXV.

Soon after this we visited the scene of another French drama, in which the events were fearfully real, and the principal actor Napoleon the Great. We mean the Palace of Peterskoi, to which he fled, on the 16th September, in 1812, whilst Moscow was in flames. It is situated about two miles from the city, on the north side. The palace itself is not large or handsome, but the grounds attached to it are remarkable for their beauty. The long drive through a forest of large trees surpasses either Windsor or Bushy Park, and the gardens generally appear to be highly prized by the Moscovians; it is, in fact, the Bois de Boulogne of Moscow. The building itself is rather singular in appearance, as it is built of bricks painted a bright red, with stone dressings at the corners and around the windows painted white. The gardens are a most delightful compound of

nature and art, being large enough to have both in perfection. Here may be seen in summer the fashion of Moscow, with all the display of carriage equipage, or the more humble citizen with his family, out for the day, and living *al fresco*. This is done in a way that would astonish our pic-nic enthusiast at home, for it is the custom here to have out not only viands of various sorts, but a full complement of tables and chairs. There they sit for hours under the trees, with the ever-steaming *somavar* on the centre of the table, always ready and willing to yield that necessary element of Russian comfort the perpetual *tchai*. This they keep drinking from the time they go out until their return, whilst

> "The bubbling and loud hissing urn
> Throws up a steamy column"

amongst the foliage over head.*

In front of the palace on the west side there is an extensive plain, which at the time of our

* The somavar is a copper vessel of something like the shape and size of an ordinary tea urn, but heated by charcoal instead of a hot iron. The fuel is placed into the centre tube, which is constructed as a small furnace in the interior of the vase, having a funnel which rises out of the top. This apparatus will keep water continually boiling by occasionally dropping a little additional fuel down the chimney.

visit was occupied by an army of about a hundred and fifty thousand men, which had been concentrated there during the coronation, in order to form a grand military display. We hired a *Letega,** for the purpose of visiting this place, and had a fine opportunity of seeing the extent of ground necessary to encamp so large a body of men, but not without some difficulty, owing to the roughness of the ground and the absence of either military roads or any other sort; we, however, did succeed in fighting our way to the extremity of the camp, and endeavoured to fight our way back again in another direction, and had already crossed many wide ditches and furrows, but at last came to one which I thought would prove more than a match for either the horse or the vehicle, and called out lustily for our istvoshik to stop, but he only shrugged his shoulders, gave one grunt to me and another to his horse, which the noble

* The letega differs from a droshky inasmuch as that in the latter gentlemen sit astride, whilst in the former you can sit inside, or ought to do, but if there are two one must inevitably be content to sit half out of the vehicle, as it is so exceedingly narrow. It has four light wheels, and a body on small C springs, something like a diminutive phæton; but the whole affair appeared as though you might take it in your arms and carry it away.

beast seemed to understand so much better than I did that before I had time to ask for an explanation horse and vehicle went, at one bound, over a ditch a yard and a half wide, with a concussion that would have terrified any one but a Russian cabdriver; but, on finding that we were more frightened than hurt, we continued on our way back to the palace, entering by the gate, and drove through the beautiful grounds once more. On emerging from this enclosure we joined the great St. Petersburg road, which is probably one of the finest in the world, and, after driving upon it for a short distance, again entered the walls of the sacred city at a large imposing gate, which is of almost the same design as the Riga gate at St. Petersburg, formed by a triumphal arch crowned with a car of victory. On passing through it our driver, as usual, crossed himself, a process which he repeated many times before reaching our hotel. His gesture always indicated to us the proximity of one of those little chapels with the saint and burning lamp to which we have already referred, and we consequently saw many more of them than we otherwise should, for as soon as he began to

go through his ceremony we were on the *qui vive.*

We had by this time seen sufficient of Moscow to form a tolerably correct idea of its most prominent characteristics, and, by dint of hard labour and many questions, soon succeeded in obtaining a general idea of its details.

We have already described the position of Moscow, with an attempt also to convey some impression of its appearance both in the streets and from a slight distance. The point of our external view was chosen rather with reference to the Kremlin than anything else, as it is under all circumstances the most striking object; four times has she risen like a phœnix from the flames, within three hundred years, and each time in increased glory, and we trust that her trials are now over, for it seems next to impossible in this age of cheapness and temporising that the Moscow of the present day could ever be excelled or even reproduced.

We have spoken of the small gardens in front of the houses, and we find also the open planted squares, such as have been so expressively called the lungs of London, plentifully scattered here and there; indeed, the taste for gardens

appears to be developed largely, not merely in their number, but in their excellence. Besides the Peterskoi grounds, which we have only just left, there are several other large parks, possessing one great charm, and that is that they are within reach of the people. No doubt the undulating surface of the ground has greatly assisted in their formation, and, indeed, we may say that Moscow has in her situation many natural advantages, for she stands, as it were, like the three legs of the Isle of Man, with a foot stretching out in each direction, one resting in the Baltic, one in the Caspian, and the other in the Black Sea. To all these places she has navigable communication, and in winter other roads are open over the snow, upon which many thousands of sledges travel to and from this great market with valuable goods from the most distant parts of the empire. In the midst of business, however, they have not neglected the refinements of life to some degree, for we find scientific and literary institutions among their buildings. The constitution of Russian society, however, is not such as to turn these provisions to the best advantage, as in all other countries it is the great middle class who support and

derive benefit from them; here the noble has the means of educating or amusing himself in an independent manner, whilst the serf has neither money nor taste for such things. The lowest class of them are called Mujiks, and if it were possible to conceive one step a little below the energy and intelligence of ordinary men, we should say it would be of this type. He is easily distinguished by his invariable sheepskin garment, which is, with the exception of high boots, almost his only clothing. It is a surtout made of a sheepskin, worn with the wool inside, and tied about him by a girdle in the middle, and when once tied it remains so as long as the coat lasts; it becomes, in fact, part of the Mujik, and only gives up its post with its existence. This is their invariable costume, and as in most other countries where the classes of the people are so widely separated, each order retains its dress with a strictness that implies almost a degree of pride. There are, however, many more pleasing varieties of dress to be met with in Moscow in equal purity, for the merchants and tradespeople of all the nations that bring their wares here retain their usual habits, and walk about the Kitai Gorod

in what would, in England, be looked upon as masquerade dress. It is here not a casual foreigner that attracts the stare of the citizens, but a city of foreigners at whom no one stares, for the number and variety have long ceased to be strange. The splendour of some of the Eastern dresses would seem almost inconsistent with the open air, if seen in London, but in the much colder climate of this sacred city they have become naturalized, and are only consistent with its own brilliancy.

In one row of shops there is a colony of Persians, whose wares are of the most superior description, and offered temptations to purchasers which we found quite irresistible. The curiosity was that all the shops were of the same description, and all the shopkeeper Persians wearing their conical lambskin hats. One of them persuaded me to buy a beautiful little Circassian belt and silver dagger, merely because it was so finely wrought and took my taste so much; but it really has never yet been used in its orthodox way, but serves the more peaceful purpose of a paper cutter.

There is nothing more varied or more characteristic than the methods of riding or driving in

different countries. The Egyptian on his camel, the Arab with his fleet steed, and the Southern African with his slow, laborious oxen, or the Indian with his elephant; all of them, however, much as they may change in the nature of their equipage, still agree in one main feature, and that is to make as much of the animal's power as they consistently can; one would think this to be a natural law, but here, in Russia, there is an extravagance indulged in that seems to have never entered the heads of equestrians of any other nation; they use vehicles only large enough to require half a horse and fasten three whole ones to it; one of which is in the centre, and doing more than is required in the way of pulling, at the same time bending his beautiful neck to the ground, like a dog hunting, whilst the other two, whose vocation is entirely ornamental, scatter themselves about on both sides, with their heads always turned round and looking behind them; the whole three are at liberty to go in any direction they choose, and when going, as usual, at a most destructive pace, they certainly look very picturesque and very dangerous. The centre one always trots, whilst the others, (which are

usually smaller horses,) are trained to canter in their own peculiar sideway manner. The middle horse is called snow-eater, most probably from the bending of his head towards the ground, and is attached to shafts, one end of which is fastened to the extremities of the front axles on the outside of the wheels and the other to the animal's collar; joined to both at this point there is a bow, called the *duga*, which rises over the horse's head like an arch, and to its summit the bridle reins are attached. The driver might be a wooden one from the way he sits--bolt upright, and both arms extended at full length straight before him, having a rein in each hand. His costume is peculiar and simple, as it consists only of a long coat and low hat; the latter very wide in the crown and very turned up at the brim; the former like a French priest's coat, but fuller in the skirt, falling about his legs like a loose robe; the body is tight to the figure, and round his waist there is usually a scarlet sash.

The method of driving with three horses is called the *Troitka* (or trinity).

There is a sort of parody upon our four-in-hand, very popular among the fashionable

equipages, in which the leaders are seven or eight yards away from the horses in the carriage, and look as though the turn-out had been a carriage and six, of which the middle pair had dropped out, leaving only the long traces hanging in the air; such driving as this can only be tolerated in open spaces and wide streets, for, in an English town, the leaders might be round a corner and into trouble before the driver would know anything about it. The vehicles are generally of the Droshky species, in various stages of development, but there are also many fine carriages and phætons used however, chiefly by the higher nobility.

One of the conveyances for ordinary people is worthy of notice, as it betrays an attempt at remedying the serious difficulty of absent springs so severely felt in other cases: this is called a *Kibitka*, and consists of four wheels and two axles, upon which are laid two long poles; resting on these poles, between the wheels, lies the body of the vehicles, small and oblong, having usually a hood over the back part. The result of this arrangement is that the elasticity of the poles adds a little to the comfort of the traveller, but really it is *only* a

little; plenty of straw or a feather bed in the bottom are considered absolutely necessary to make the vehicles tolerable for long journeys.

The grand feature of Russian equipages appear to be recklessness of either the carriage or its contents. No doubt we saw even less of this than we otherwise should owing to the crowded state of the streets, for the great occasion had filled the city with strangers and military, the latter, of course, being never strangers anywhere. The brilliancy of their uniforms added greatly to the gay appearance of the streets and public places, more especially during the illuminations, for the immense floods of light that were thrown around from so many thousands of lamps sparkling upon their accoutrements and decorations rendered them very conspicuous.

Most of the public buildings were splendidly illuminated, but the churches and towers of the Kremlin and the Basil Blazan were almost covered; their outline and general forms were not only delineated by lines of lamps, but almost concealed by new forms, invented for the occasion, huge arms standing over the top of Ivan Valeki, for instance, hung with hundreds

of lights that gave his summit the appearance rather of a full blown flower than anything else. The effect of the whole at night was exceedingly grand, and the preparations were everywhere retained and lighted up for many successive evenings; indeed to have expended so much labour for one night's festival would have been a positive waste.

Added to all this, the constant flitting about of troops on horseback did much to enliven the scene. Their constant variety of costumes and bright colours were conspicuous over the heads of the crowd, and occasionally a band of Cossacks would move through the mass with their long pointed lances waving three or four yards in the air.

All this display, however, could not last for ever, and as soon as it was over the chief anxiety of every one was to get to St. Petersburg in time to see the continued festivities there. The attachés of the various embassies were the first to be on the move, and, from their great influence and foresight, had appropriated all the first class carriages on the railway, very much to the chagrin of hundreds of respectable people, who would have liked also to be com-

fortable, including ourselves. This difficulty had continued for some days, when we began also to think of following the stream, and our landlord kindly assisted us by procuring a new passport, as our old one, although good enough so long as we remained here, would not allow us to leave the place.

CHAP. XXVI.

On the morning of our departure a porter was sent off with our luggage at about half past eight, more than two hours before the time at which the train was to start, in order that he might procure our tickets before the crowd arrived. We followed him with at least an hour to spare, pluming ourselves upon the admirable foresight that had led us to take such prudent measures; and although we were a little surprised to find the large space in front of the station completely filled with carriages and people, at which a crowd of mujiks were cheering, still we felt secure in the prospect of our advance guard, the porter, awaiting us with the tickets; there he was, sure enough, but instead of them he exhibited the rouble notes and a very woful countenance, shaking his head and crying *"niet! niet!"* Accustomed as we were to disappointments, this was still a little

tiresome, as we knew we had not deserved it for neglect or want of punctuality; but instead of sitting down to grieve, I sat down to take care of the luggage, whilst my husband went to put his own shoulder to the wheel, or rather to the porter, for he placed him in front, and by sheer force, pushed him into the crowd again, which was congregated about the booking-desk. There was still half an hour before train time, and hosts of people were struggling for tickets, but as they were well-dressed gentlemen, our poor serf had not dared to force his way through them; but now the case was altered; he was impelled from behind by a power that had no such scruples, and before long they together reached the counter, and then "got the tickets!" you think. No, nothing of the sort; but were told that there were none to get, the number capable of being accommodated by the train having been disposed of long ago, and the issue was mercilessly stopped. We had actually to wait in that place three hours and a half, without daring to move for fear of being equally unfortunate by the next train, we had been particularly urgent in taking an early breakfast, and after all the exertion

felt inclined to take another; but not a bit of anything could we get either to eat or to drink, and at two o'clock, when the train at last started, we were as hungry as hawks. Notwithstanding all our exertions, we could only succeed in getting second class tickets, and found ourselves in a long saloon carriage with some eighty or ninety persons of all grades in society, noblemen and civilians, who were destined to be our companions for the next four and twenty hours. As a general rule they were tolerably agreeable. There was only one Englishman amongst them, and as he did not suit us very well on the commencement of acquaintance, it was not cultivated. It may be well supposed that after all our starvation the first stoppage for refreshments was hailed with joy; but it was only a new opportunity for fortune to torment us, as that many headed monster, "the crowd," got there first, and devoured up all that was immediately available. My attempts at Russian were fruitless, and no one took the slightest notice of either that or the energetic pantomime in which we both indulged. Ultimately, however, we did succeed in getting a glass of *tchai*, and consoled our-

selves with the prospect that dinner would be announced at the next station. A respectable old gentleman had said so, and we believed him. Appropos of refreshments, one of our companions, in the course of conversation, related that he was at the ball given by the Countess of Granville, and as the waiters were all English, those who were ignorant of that language came but poorly off; for his own part he had learnt a phrase in English from a friend there, but it seemed to have no beneficial effect, although he repeated it to every waiter he met; and, on my requesting him to repeat the phrase, it turned out to be "I love you." No wonder the waiters did not understand him. As French is the polite language of the Russian court, the Count de Morny's waiters were more serviceable.

The day wore on and our appetites becoming sharper we looked forward with some anxiety to the promised dinner, but station after station passed and still no signs of it; at last night came on, and it was not until we reached Tver, at a little past ten o'clock, that we really got something to eat. The oppressive heat of the carriage by this time became dreadful, as the windows were kept shut, and

the gloomy crowd beginning to settle themselves, in vain attempts to get a little rest made matters only more dismal. Many little clusters occupied themselves with loud talking and gossip that added considerably to the difficulty of making ourselves comfortable, for, in the middle of the night, chattering tongues never seem consistent anywhere. As usual I was fortunate enough to find a friend in the old gentleman, of whom we spoke lately, he happened to occupy one of the two seats forming the bench upon which I sat, (my husband sitting opposite), and as bedtime approached he kindly gave up his seat, in order that I might have a rest of more couch-like character, and spent the night himself in pacing about the carriage, indeed there were others who had had to do so from the first; but even when I got it there was little opportunity of making it useful, for the continued conversational powers of some of our companions were exercised upon us, as we were foreigners and fair game. One lady in particular, whose habits and costume appeared decidedly Russian, poured forth a stream of questions, all of which were evidently dictated from an impression that

the English were unrefined barbarians, who neither had anything civilised to enjoy, or the taste to enjoy it. Her astonishment was great at some of the replies she received, which probably might, after all, not convince her that we were really worthy of being classed amongst the great nations of the earth. She was from Odessa, and seemed to be fond of company, for she regretted very much that the war was over, as the number of officers in their town made the place so gay by the balls and parties that were given. This was rather a contrast to the evidence we had heard at Riga from the poor Russians there, who were starving in rags whilst the defenders of their country were dancing in full dress.

The night wore on by patience and a deal of suffering, for the temperature was that of an oven, and the close atmosphere induced by eighty people breathing for so long in a tight wooden box was by this time very disagreeable. When daylight arrived the prospect outside did very little to improve the aspect of affairs, for we had leaped, as it were, in the dark from the undulating and cheerful landscape around Moscow to the barren, marshy flats, whose

only redeeming point was that they showed we were a little nearer St. Petersburg.

The end of the darkness was, however, by no means the end of our journey, for it was not until the middle of the next day that we arrived again at the capital. It was one o'clock, and the station as full as it would hold. The porters, who are soldiers, were as busy as ants in a granary, and the little droshkies were hurrying away with the luggage as fast as it could be tumbled into them; indeed, so fast were they hurried away that we had considerable difficulty in getting one, which, when procured, was only large enough for a single person. We had, however, not only *both* to be accommodated, but also our luggage, and how we got to Miss Benson's without a serious accident to one of the three is a wonder; but we did get there, and found the house almost too full to admit us. Our hostess, however, willingly set about contriving how to expand the capabilities of her hotel, and we were in deep discussion respecting shake down beds and screens in unusual places when a benevolent old Quaker gentleman stepped up and offered his bedroom to our service for that night, as he was going out to spend it else-

where. We accepted his offer gratefully, and found our benefactor to be one of the three English deputies who had been sent by the Peace Society previous to the war, to try if they could persuade the Emperor to give up his attack on Turkey, and "kiss and be friends" with every body. But on this occasion he had arrived on the previous day with mercantile business on hand. We afterwards became excellent friends, and continued so during the time he remained at the hotel. Of course we had to vacate his apartment next day, but in the meantime another gentleman had departed and we entered upon undisturbed possession.

CHAP XXVII.

We have already explained that on first entering St. Petersburg strangers must report themselves to the police, and at Count Orloff's office. We, of course, cleared our consciences of this duty at once, and were thereby enabled to procure the indispensable *carte de séjour*, without which there could be no rest for us in St. Petersburg. Although we had made good use of our time during the day or two before departing for Moscow, still we had not attempted to make anything like a systematic survey of the place, but now were fully prepared to set about it in earnest.

So much has been said and written about this most extraordinary city, that it is almost impossible to find new words for tales which have been not twice, but a hundred times told. The character of its founder, besides the peculiarities of the place, lend an interest to it which

few cities possess. Its most curious feature is that, for a city of so great magnitude, its growth should be so rapid; in fact, it has no antiquities, and other nations who glory in the association of history attached to their capitals, can scarcely realize the feeling of reverence in this mushroom miracle which should accompany true patriotic respect. Magnificent as it undoubtedly is, it partakes of the true fungoid characteristics, a production of fragile material coming rapidly to maturity in a damp place. It is not like Venice, for its streets are earth, and of immense width; it is not like Amsterdam, for it has nothing ancient, and yet the palaces of the one and the piling of the other are equalled by those of St. Petersburg.

Nothing but that perversity of purpose which often characterises men of strong will, could have induced the selection of such a site for a capital. It appears chosen rather to show the determination of its founder to oppose nature, and exhibit the greatness of his power in contrast to the adverse character of the materials he had to deal with.

Imagine a monarch looking for an eligible site upon which to place a city that should

supplant Moscow, setting out with all the glory of Moscow in his eye, and knowing that the capital of a nation should be the noblest of its cities; imagine him standing upon the slimy banks of a sluggish river whose waters almost rise above the marsh through which it lazily pours into the Gulf of Finland—the very earth on which he stands sinks beneath him unable to bear his weight, and the whole mouth of the stream is filled with an expanse of mud, upon which he gazes with an abstracted eye, saying to himself, "There shall be St. Petersburg." This must have been a real scene, for there *does* stand the city in all its glory. The mud is almost substituted by massive piles, which stand within it as plentifully as the slender rushes that once grew upon its surface, and in place of the few pebbles and solitary birds that were then the only tenants of this wilderness, there is now a maze of granite, every stone of which has been carried to its place by the hands of men, a hundred thousand of whom laid down their lives in the task of rearing a city in twelve months, so quickly must the realization follow conception with emperors, at whatever cost, and at the moment we write there is probably no

capital in Europe that strikes the visitor, on first entering it, with such an idea of vastness.

The river Neva, at the mouth of which it is situated, is about forty miles long, flowing from the lake Ladoga into the Gulf of Finland, and forms one of the links in the great chain of water communication from the Baltic to the Black and Caspian Seas. The general flow of the stream is of course from east to west, but at the point where it enters St. Petersburg the flow is due north; it proceeds thus for about two miles, forming almost the eastern boundary of the city, and then turning suddenly to the west darts at once into its centre, where it divides into two arms, one starting off northwards, as though determined to take the original direction, and the other continuing its westward course, but after about a mile of single blessedness, again splitting in two and diverging at about equal angles, enclosing within their arms a large triangular island, of perhaps two miles wide and three long, called *Vasiliefskoy*. These two branches of the river are respectively called the Great and Little Neva, the little one being the most northern. The branch which turned off previously to the

final division, and went away to the north by itself, is called the Nevka, but it does not go far without trying to find a westerly outlet, and in doing so also divides into Great and Little Nevka, the *great* one in this case being the north branch. All these four great outlets, however, on approaching the sea, split up into numerous ramifications, ultimately discharging themselves into the Gulf of Finland, within a length of about five miles between the extreme channels. The consequence of this sub-division is that after the first fork in the heart of the city, St. Petersburg becomes nothing more than a mass of islands, the largest of which is called *Vasiliefskoi,* and others in the order of their size are *Aptekarskoi, Kristovskoi, Elaginskoi, Kammenoi, Peterskoi,* and about a dozen others, decreasing rapidly in size and importance. One of especial consequence stands in the Neva just at the point where the Great and Little Neva separate, and lies as it were against the north bank; upon this stands the citadel, which may be said to be as it were the nucleus of the whole city, for it was upon this spot that Peter the Great, the founder of the place, built himself a little log hut, in which he resided. The

building is carefully preserved, and forms one of the most interesting sights of the capital. The island itself is called St. Petersburg, from which the rest of the city takes its name. The whole of these islands are nothing more than vast plains of consolidated mud, and the surface of the streets upon them is so little above the level of the streams, and so perfectly flat, that when viewed from the top of one of the numerous towers the whole mass of buildings appears to be floating in the water. Besides these many mouths of the river there are numerous canals, the longest of which, called the *Zagorodni*, runs from the Neva, previous to its westward bend, to the Great Neva, at its outlet. The Fontanka canal is a wonderful work, executed during the reign of Catherine the Second, and lined on each side with massive blocks of granite; this canal forms an arc, and is considerably nearer the town than the former one, within this again runs the Catarina canal, and between the latter and the river runs the Moika canal, all communicating with each other and with the river. It will be seen that this portion of the city is thus cut up into long divisions, the whole lying to the south,

or left bank of the Great Neva, and comprising the most important part of the capital. This particular district is called the Bolshaia Storona, or Greater Side, and although originally built upon a peninsula encircled by the river, it has been divided into islands by the canals just mentioned.

The circumference of the city is about eighteen miles, and it contains upwards of five hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants, about one quarter the population of London. Small as this number appears, comparatively, it must be remembered that it is the growth of little more than a century and a half, as it was only founded in 1703, and has since that time been devastated by many fearful inundations, one of which, in 1824, rose to so great a height as to destroy fifteen thousand people, and property to an immense value.

As in most other cities, the inhabitants classify themselves by the choice of the locality in which they settle, and we find that upon the mainland north and east of the river the greater proportion of the labouring and manufacturing population resides, whilst the better class of streets and public buildings are to be found south

of the river upon the peninsula, and amongst the canals.

We have mentioned the Great Neva as being the southern arm of the river after its second division at the point where it leaves the main stream, and on the south bank stands an immense pile of building, called the Admiralty, which seems to be the centre of this half of the city, as the Citadel is the centre of the northern half. From the Admiralty the streets diverge like rays from a star, stretching away to the extreme boundaries of the town in straight lines for miles in length, crossing the various canals by noble bridges, and presenting the most extensive views to be had in any streets of the world.

It will be difficult to convey to a Londoner, who is accustomed to the narrow streets of the city, an adequate idea of the effect produced by a promenade down the Nevskoi Prospeckt, one of those rays of which we have just spoken. He may, however, imagine a Regent Street of palaces, three miles long, and a hundred and fifty feet wide, having a carriage drive on each side, paved with wood, and a gutter in the centre running between the two. The foot-

paths on each side are flagged with granite, similar to the streets of Aberdeen, which is the only other city where we have seen it. There are two other streets of great importance, which diverge from the Admiralty platz, the *Gorokhovais Oulitza* and *Vosnosenski Prospekt*. These are the most prominent divisions of the *Bolshaia Storona*, which is sometimes called also the Admiralty quarter, the northern boundary of which is, of course, the river, along whose south bank runs a noble quay, stretching east and west from the Admiralty. The river wall is of red granite, and upon its top there is a parapet of the same material, about a yard high, but instead of being built in small pieces as is usual in England, it is composed of long solid blocks of the full height and thickness in one stone, the length of many of them being exceedingly great, producing an effect of unusual massiveness and stability. The road itself is of considerable width, and is paved with granite; the raised footpaths are flagged with similar material. At the western extremity it terminates at the Dock Yard, and in the last house, and, in fact, at the end of St. Petersburg (on this side the Neva) stood our residence, the Miss Benson's before referred to. The quay at this point is

dignified by the appellation of Ingliskaia Naberejenaia, or English Quay, and as it is the usual landing place of most foreigners who arrive by water, it is perhaps as well known a locality as any in the capital. On the opposite side of the river there is a similar quay, forming the south boundary of the island *Vasiliefskoi*, before mentioned, which contains a large number of the business population, and the greatest portion of the commercial and public buildings. The Exchange is situated on the tongue of land dividing the Great and Little Neva exactly at the junction of the two, and opposite the Admiralty. To the north west of this, and upon the Little Neva, is the Custom House, and three miles distant, at the other extremity of the island, are some magnificent piles of warehouses, the whole intervening space being laid out in rectangular blocks of building by regular and commodious streets, in which are the principal mercantile offices; as, however, the interest of our visit does not extend to more than a casual notice of these; acknowledging their importance, we shall leave them without further comment, and endeavour to recall our impressions of things and places whose associations have more attraction for us.

CHAP. XXVIII.

It must not be supposed that during the time occupied in making this sweeping survey of the city we have been sleeping in the streets, which have so much excited our admiration, or living on the waters of the Neva, delicious as it is; it will be remembered that previous to our departure for Moscow we spent some days here, having put up our horses, as some people say, (but in our case it is only carriage and no horses), at the house mentioned in the last chapter, and out of compassion for the feelings of our readers, who might suppose us still in domestic difficulties, we may say that we were very comfortable, but, of course, we must add "under the circumstances," because, for instance, let your hostess be as kind as she likes, nothing will persuade Britons to believe that warming houses by close brick stoves can be as cheerful as the "bonny bright blink o' one's ain fireside."

We rose one fine morning, and as usual with people who want to do a good day's work prepared for a good breakfast, and on descending to the table found ourselves in company with people of all nations, for although this is strictly intended to be an English house, it appears that there was sufficient attraction to induce others to come and learn the meaning of the word comfortable. Part of the company consisted of the members of the British Embassy, who remained guests in the house for several days, one of them, the young Lord ——, excited much admiration, by sending away his servants on board the vessel off Cronstadt, a few days before taking his own departure, in order that he might learn how to manage for himself in a strange place, and he stood the test well, bustling about his luggage and other matters with as much ability as though he hadn't been a Lord at all.

We may now be supposed to have taken our repast, and sallied forth from the hotel by the door which faces the Neva, and find ourselves upon the footpath looking over the parapet wall which so lately called forth our praises; the objects of attraction are several large steam

yachts belonging to the noblemen attached to the court, one of which turns out to be an old acquaintance, a neat looking steamer that used to ply between Liverpool and Runcorn, but has very lately retired from that business, and instead of carrying holiday folks on our dirty river Mersey as the "Countess of Ellesmere," she now carries the Grand Duke Constantine, and has a terrible hard word for a name. She is always kept in trim for sea, with steam up, and everything prepared for service at a moment's notice. The marines pacing about, and the cannons upon the decks gave them all quite an important character. All this time we have been standing upon the parapet of this beautiful quay, but turning away suddenly to walk across to the houses, tumble down into the road with a thump, as this lovely terrace has been evidently intended for people built upon the same Brobdignagian scale as the city, for it stands nearly half a yard above the roadway, which is of the most miscellaneous character, being a compound of granite mountains, valleys of flint, and lakes of mud, which, however, *sometimes* dry and becomes dust. If you can manage to get on the Trottoir and walk north-

wards for half a mile you will see on the right hand a large pile of buildings of an imposing appearance; this is the Admiralty, which we have already mentioned. The river *front* is, however, only considered to be the *back*, and we have, therefore, to walk round to the other side where we find a noble platz, into which the three great thoroughfares are pouring a scanty Russian crowd. The people, however numerous, are lost in the vast expanse of space, the extent of which may be imagined from the fact that one side is three quarters of a mile long, of which the Admiralty is a quarter of a mile, and its width six hundred feet. The latter has a remarkable spire, fine, tapering, and gilded, which is, as it were, the centre of attraction from all parts, as it can be seen glittering in the sun all over the city. It is crowned by an immense vane, a ship in full sail also brilliantly gilded, and quite a model of perfect conduct for other vessels, as it always keeps before the wind. The building is principally a school for cadets; there are, however, offices and a model room under its roof, which no doubt serve some useful purpose.

The building gives its name to the vast square in which it stands, and immediately

adjoining it, on the same side, is the Winter Palace, the most majestic building that we have seen, having a front towards the Neva of nearly eight hundred feet long, and as its plan is a complete square, it covers a large area of ground, or rather of piles, for the whole city stands upon wood instead of earth. The exterior of the palace is Italian, having three stories crowned by a ballustrade decorated by alternate vases and statues. The general design is simple, but of considerable elegance; long rows of columns in pairs stand upon projecting bases and support the cornice, which is elaborately decorated. This enormous building is said to be the largest royal residence in the world, and when the Emperor is at home accommodates six thousand of his attendants: the services rendered by some of them must be a long time in reaching their master. The original palace was burned down in 1837, and the present one erected completely as it now stands in the amazingly short space of two years. We are quite certain that it has often been compared to Alladin's Palace, a phœnix, or a mushroom, and shall, therefore, refrain from using those similes, but cannot help realizing the intense interest that

must have been felt to witness the growth of such a magnificent edifice—we say *growth* because progress seems too slow a word, and so great is the mass of structure that the daily, nay, almost hourly increase must have been visible. The energies of the workmen were, however, excited by a double impulse, their devotion to their Emperor and a belief that the work was a holy one. This originated in the curious circumstance that the gold cross upon the chapel remained throughout the whole conflagration unscathed. It must have been an imposing sight, and one highly calculated to affect the simple minded Mujiks, to see the symbol of their faith braving the devouring element and towering high above amongst the dark rolling smoke, with all the splendour of gold lit up by fire. There was, however, almost as powerful a motive in the people's devotion to their monarch, for he gained their hearts by his efforts, at the time of this calamity, to save those who were, in their anxiety to assist, rushing into danger. There are many stories told of his destroying, with his own hands, objects of immense value, when he saw the lives of his people in danger from their eagerness to

save his treasures. It seems as though the desire for speed were inherent in the Romanoff family. The great Peter built the city in twelve months, and his successor wandered restlessly about this palace, like an eagle without its nest, for two years, until it was complete, and the present Czar has now the most splendid residence of any monarch whose home we have visited. We did not, however, visit the interior of this one without some difficulty, for we happened to want to see it at a time when the inhabitants wanted us *not* to see it, and as no one is admitted *publicly* without an order, we were bemoaning our fate at Miss Benson's, when we were reminded on all sides by our companions of the power of roubles, and then reproaching ourselves with stupidity in forgetting this great Russian fact, we set off at once, arrayed in full dress, according to standing orders, and, of course, went to the wrong door. Presenting our full dressed selves at a grand entrance on the side next the river, we knocked and rang as though we did not think we were doing anything wrong, when a splendid Russian, full fledged in imperial feathers, showed his countenance, with an expression by no means encouraging to ordi-

nary people. We stepped in at once, evidently much to his surprise, but as we did not understand Russian, especially when it was in the objective case, we were a considerable distance into the interior before he succeeded in arresting our passage, but the sight of the Emperor's image upon some little bits of metal which we allowed him to see, seemed to gradually modify his tone, and, at last, having during the conversation got round some corners, and a long way from the door, we completed the conquest by bestowing the treasures in as quiet a manner as possible.

Of course the reader is looking forward to a description of the various apartments, but he has perhaps forgotten that the house holds six thousand people. We would like, at least, to describe the principal rooms, but the fact is we can't do it; there is nothing but one continued maze of splendour, no man on earth knows all the ins and outs of the place, so just think of total strangers sitting down to describe it at a distance of two thousand miles. We have our memories full of marble staircases, marble walls, splendid polished porphyry, granite and malachite, one room being entirely furnished

with the latter material, in fact the most lavish expenditure, both upon material or manufacture, is to be met with at every turn. The Roman Emperor offered a reward to any one who could invent a new pleasure. The Czar might safely offer a premium for an addition to the luxury of his palace; not merely is it a matter of extravagance, but in many cases true taste and refinement is evidently the leading principle: for instance, there is a white room perfectly exquisite, white marble and gold being the chief material. In many rooms the fire screens are a transparent sheet of plate glass, which are certainly in much better taste than the heavy mementoes of our English patience rendered in Berlin wool, which we commonly use at home. The ball room is a gem, having a comfortable gallery at one end. In one or two rooms there are recesses which are occupied by lively little fountains of elegant form. A succession of boudoirs and rooms of all imaginable names, are filled with treasures of the most learned and complicated sort, such as would delight either ladies or lords, savants or soldiers; in fact it is a perfect palace, and that is enough to say of any place on earth. We have not,

however, quite finished yet, for there is a picture gallery and a throne room, in the former we felt grateful to find that our Iron Duke holds a conspicuous position, and in the latter I felt proud to hold a conspicuous position myself, for I, according to my usual custom in royal palaces, took my seat upon the throne, and really it seemed to be quite as comfortable as any I have sat upon, and I may, without boasting, say that I have tried a good many. In the picture gallery, of course, there are many good pictures, those that cost the most money being as usual the least attractive to look at. The proper number of Canalettis, Raphaels, Bergheim, Van Eyks, and all the worthies of various schools have representatives here, but as our readers would never remember them we shall only say that it is a good gallery, and make the best of our way to the place that of all others in the building possessed the greatest interest at the moment, the private room of the late Emperor Nicholas; it is upon the ground floor, and of very small dimensions—say, perhaps five yards long by three or four wide. Everything remains just as he left it, the little iron tressle which served him for a bed

stands opposite the fireplace, upon it lie two bags of straw, one for a bed and the other for a pillow, and upon these he died. His tattered old coat rests at its foot, and a pair of slippers are upon the floor, darned and patched in a manner that would render them a disgrace to one of the servants of His Majesty's head boot cleaner, but then every darn was done with thread of a different colour, and every stitch of every darn was done by the hand of the emperor himself. His handkerchief still lies under his pillow, and his gun and sword stand in a corner. The whole furniture of the place would perhaps be worth about twenty shillings; one thing, however, it contained, which to him may often have been worth the whole palace, a portrait of his favourite daughter, who died whilst he was in England; this is the only attempt at decoration of an expensive kind, but its value has little relation to its cost. This gave us something to think about as we left, and when we quitted this beautiful interior could not help regretting that so fair a jewel should have such a poor setting, for, splendid as it is, the exterior is only brieks and plaster.

Adjoining it on the east side, and having

a front in the same line, stands another remarkable building, remarkable alike for itself and for its origin; it was built by the Empress Catharine as her own especial palace, and by no means justifies its appellation, for it is as little like a hermitage as any place I know. Standing as it does between a great public square and the river, with a palace at one end and a theatre at the other, and joined to both by passages and a bridge. The only merit in an architectural point of view externally is its vastness; internally, however, it deserves admiration at almost every turn. We entered by the eastern portico, which is supported by caryatides, of probably twenty feet high, of polished grey granite, each being in one stone. The staircase inside is of the same material, and of noble proportions, producing even a finer effect upon us than the grand stair of the Vatican, at Rome. The hall staircase and landings have all the same solidity of construction, and at the top there are some large sphinxes, which give a majestic dignity to the entrance, of almost an Egyptian character. The antiquity implied by the symbols is, however, not real, for although the place is full of wonders, and a perfect museum of works of

art and vertu, still they are all modern, with the exception of old pictures, and some antiquities from Kertch.

The apartments are constructed (or decorated, we scarcely know which to say, so great is their splendour) with the most beautiful kinds of stone, chiefly brought from Siberia, the marble being of the most brilliant variety, and highly polished. Vases of jasper, porphyry and malachite, and furniture of lapis lazuli in the most gorgeous profusion. Cameos in thousands, and of the rarest kind, are distributed about the chambers. The pictures are numerous, and by the best masters, at least we found plenty of good names upon them; for instance, amongst Italians Guido, Carracci, Salvator Rosa, Raphael, and plenty more. Of Dutchmen, Teniers, Rubens, Wouvermans, Rembrandt, Schnieders, and Vandyke. Murillo represents Spanish art, and as there are an immense number of pictures that we did not even look at, there will, no doubt, be a fair proportion of all the best artists amongst those enriching the collection. One of the most interesting parts, however, is an exact copy of the Loggia, at the Vatican, the frescoes of which can be much

better studied here than in the original, on account of the greater access of light, so that although these works have not the genuineness of antiquity with all its dirt and obscurity, they have the advantage of being intelligible.

The library is said to contain one hundred and twenty thousand volumes, but we have not the slightest idea of what they are all about, as our chief attention was directed to the manuscripts, of which there is a large and interesting collection.

The antiquities from Kertch occupy several rooms, and are exceedingly numerous and valuable, recalling many classic associations. The laurel wreaths of pure gold are as perfect as need be if they were intended to crown a poet to-morrow, but the heads to which they belong lie mouldering away in the numerous sarcophagi which have been torn from their original resting places, to wake up inspiration in the hundredth generation of their successors. By a little connivance on the part of our guide, and a little thoroughly English sacrilege, I became possessed of a fragment of bone and some grains of dust, which may probably have

"walked the streets of *Kertch* three thousand years ago."

There are a few mementoes of more modern monarchs, consisting of an extensive collection of—what?—yes, you may guess often enough before you hit the mark; these treasured articles are—snuff-boxes! of every size, and capable of accommodating all sorts of noses. Something more useful, however, has been retained to commemorate the first Peter, as he has left a number of works by his own hands. We have constantly to refer to mementoes of him in various places; here the most remarkable are some ivory carvings of figures grouped in various ways, which at least do credit to the great Czar's industry. Russian royalty has always been industrious, and in no way more so than in building palaces. We have already walked down the quay, and seen two of the most magnificent palaces of the world, in the same line as the Admiralty, and the series is still unfinished. After the Hermitage, and, in fact, forming a continuation of the same building is the Imperial Theatre, and still further on we find a solemn edifice of great size, with a lower storey of grey granite, and the remainder of a

limestone, from Finland, almost as grey as the granite. Of course we should have been inclined to admire this, if we had been led only to expect a *stone* building, but having set out with the intention of seeing what is called the *marble* palace, we were a little disappointed. however, it *is* partly of *Finnish* marble, and having so far satisfied the letter of the law, we allowed the internal superiority of the more modest plaster of the winter palace to mitigate our indignation at this imposture.

There are many other palaces of importance, among which the Annitchkoff, the Michailoff, and that of the Grand Duke Michael are conspicuous as fine buildings; but there is another royal palace, at a distance of about a mile, to which we must devote some attention, as it is one of considerable consequence, although through various vicissitudes of fortune not now obtaining the same attention as in the days of its glory. It was originally built for Potemkin, Catharine's favourite minister, and must, in its palmy day, have been a place of surpassing splendour. The ball room is three hundred and twenty feet long by seventy feet wide, and decorated by numerous beautiful statues, some

of which are, however, only plaster. The columns are painted white, with a gold wreath winding spirally around them. The chandeliers are handsome, and of rather eccentric design, a series of rings, through which a serpent coils itself upwards; all this, however, is of ordinary magnificence. The remarkable feature is the winter garden adjoining, or we might almost say forming a continuance of this vast room. Imagine the whole side of the apartment thrown down, and behind, like a fairy scene in an extravaganza, we perceive a forest of real trees, real labyrinths of green hedges in full growth, shrubs, flowers, and above all real grass; all this exists, and exists *inside* the house, occupying an extent of six acres. What splendid scenes of enjoyment must this place have witnessed. The laws of nature seem to form no obstacle to the will of Russian monarchs, they petrify mud into stone cities, and shutting out the climate nature gives them, make one of their own which transposes the seasons, bringing forth the fruits and flowers of the tropics in the midst of the Russian winter snow. Night was turned into day at this place by twenty thousand wax lights, and as though

to complete the illusion the music was like that of Ariel, "no sound the earth owns," but heard from above, as the musicians were on dancing occasions suspended in the chandeliers. "This will prove a brave kingdom where you hear the tune of your catch played by the picture of nobody."

CHAP. XXIX.

We have now wandered through a range of palaces in a straight line from our hotel, and have never yet left the bank of the river; the last one described is, however, three miles from our starting point, and as that is quite far enough from home at present, we will retrace our steps, and endeavour to say something of the Admiralty Platz, which has already been frequently referred to. There are many things in it worthy of notice, the celebrated equestrian statue of Peter the Great, for instance, of which it is more than probable the reader knows as much as we can tell, but as it is necessary for the consistency of our notes, I shall, without scruple, run the risk of repetition, and "tell the tale as it was told to me."

At the east end of the square, and opposite the winter palace, stands an immense pile of building called the Etat Major; it is of a

magnitude quite capable of forming a consistent *vis a vis* to its more noble companion, but devoted to military purposes instead of royalty. The front is in the form of a large crescent of plain symetrical design, crowned by a triumphal chariot, with Dame Victory driving eight abreast, a la Russe.

Immediately opposite, and in the centre of the open place, stands the Alexander Monument, an immense monolith, crowned by a bronze figure holding a cross. There is nothing remarkable in the design for either elegance or originality. Nature has decidedly the best of it here, for the shaft, which is eighty feet long in one piece of granite, is the most interesting feature about it. The base is also of one block; this with the angel at the top makes the total height a hundred and fifty feet. The other remarkable monument is that of Peter the Great, already alluded to; his steed has not yet got to the top of the little precipice up which he has been prancing for seventy four years; perhaps the serpent at his heel may have as fast hold as ever. This expedient of fastening the mass of bronze to the pedestal by the hind legs alone has been a happy thought, for

it not only adds spirit to the work but suggests a moral. There is an equestrian statue to Wellington, in Edinburgh, which stands on a square pedestal, of the tea-caddy order, with his fore legs also in the air, but his flowing tail droops to the ground and forms the necessary means of poising the figure. The precipice is one solid block of granite, which was brought from a Finnish village some miles distant, with great pomp and ceremony. Soldiers with drums and fifes cheered on the labourers who were busy dressing this rustic production into form for the high honour intended for it in the great capital, and, as usual with rustics who undergo that process, a good deal of its native simplicity was sacrificed, as the grandeur of the mass was diminished by a third, the length of the stone was originally forty five feet, and its thickness twenty five, but it is now trimmed into a shape that has no definite dimensions. Amongst the other fine buildings surrounding this square, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the last named monument, there is an edifice called the Senate-house, its name being sufficiently expressive of its use. Crossing the place to the south side, we find a

new and more interesting object than the house of law, a splendid new Church, of immense but graceful proportions. A general idea of its form may be obtained from the dome and clock towers of St. Paul's, in London, with the addition of two other similar small towers at the opposite side. The plan of the edifice is, as usual, that of a Greek cross, the dome standing over the centre and the towers at the extremities. There is a noble portico standing upon a flight of polished red granite steps, which is in one long stone. The surmounting columns are also polished granite, and of one piece, each sixty feet long and seven feet diameter. The extravagance of material in this wonderful building if anything exceeds even Russian profusion. The exterior walls are of a grey stone, while the interior is of porphyry, granite and marble of various colours, inlaid in patterns upon both walls and floors, beautifully polished, with vases and columns of Malachite and Lapis Lazuli, whose dimensions must be named in yards instead of feet, all highly polished, and hewn with the most lavish expenditure of labour.

There is a little circular temple within the

Ikonastos, consisting of a small dome supported upon columns resting on a flight of steps, which is intended to be used by the priest in part of the service. The steps are of porphyry; the floor is tastefully inlaid with Siberian marble of many colours. The columns are eight in number, eight feet high, and entirely of Malachite, with the exception of the bases and Corinthian capitals, which are gilt. This is certainly the most exquisite bit of work we have seen, and we were not surprised to hear that its value is upwards of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling. Such valuable material as Malachite and Lapis Lazuli are dealt out to us at home by square inches, and even highly prized then, but what can we say of columns fifty feet high, such as we find here. We were told that the cost of the whole edifice has been thirteen million pounds sterling, of which two hundred thousand were spent in piling for the foundation alone. We have referred to the taper spire of the Admiralty as one of the beacons of St. Petersburg, conspicuous from all parts; the huge dome of this Church is another, as it is, with the small cupolas upon the four towers, covered with gold,

which shines as brilliantly as though only fresh from the Mint yesterday. There are numerous columns of polished granite running in glittering lines around these domes, an unusually large gold cross crowning the whole, and the effect of the exteriors when sparkling in the sun is splendid in the extreme. All the granite, marble, or other stone used in the building is polished and worked to the highest perfection. The interior is, without doubt, the most magnificent place of worship that we have ever seen. The profusion of solid gold, the enormous masses of precious stones, the mere dust from working which, would, in England, be used as jewellery, and the variety of colour produce an overpowering splendour, which is further heightened by the light from the numerous stained glass windows. The Church is not yet open for public worship, and we should have had considerable difficulty in gaining admittance, indeed, perhaps failed altogether, had it not been for the kindness of some friends to whom we had letters from their relations in England. We were also indebted to them for a second visit to the Winter Palace, as they took the trouble to procure an order

for us; this time, of course, we went in like respectable people, through the public door, but were soon out again, for unfortunately I was so overpowered by the peculiar heated atmosphere in the place that I was reluctantly obliged to leave at once. We have often mentioned the high temperature at which the Russian interiors are kept, and as the palace is warmed by heated air distributed through the building by pipes or some other contrivance, it was so great a contrast to the chill external air, and of such an unpleasant kind, that I was compelled to beat a retreat; but we are just now dealing with churches, not with palaces, any further than to shew our gratitude, and inform future travellers that it is good to have a friend at Court.

The peculiarity of external design incident to the Russian churches arises from the general practice of building them all upon a plan in the form of a Greek cross, the arms of which being all equal offer less facility for variety in the design. Most English and Italian cathedrals being in the form of the Latin cross have the advantage of a long arm upon one side, which gives a dignity to the nave which can scarcely

be obtained by the former design. There is, however, one church in St. Petersburg, and one of the principal ones, which, instead of having a limb lengthened, has one which is shorter than the other three, presenting a plan of a very unusual, and, to a Russian, very unorthodox form. This arises from the site of the church having been fixed too close to the Catharina canal, which passes it on the east side, whilst the Nevskoi Prospect runs across its north front. This church is dedicated to our Lady of Kazan, and is situated about half a mile from the Admiralty square, upon the southern side of the great street. As in the Isak Church, we find here the central dome and cross decorated by gilding, with the smaller ones at the angles; but in this case there is a new feature introduced, by an attempt at imitating St. Peter's, in Rome. The general form of the cathedral is, of course, something like it in common with all others, having cupolas and small towers, but, in addition, there is a grand crescent of a hundred and thirty two Corinthian columns, thirty five feet high, each, as usual, being true props of a single stone. Many of the other churches in St. Petersburg

are designs of modern artists, but this is the production of a Russian, and, as may be inferred from what we have already said, externally, at least, it wants the charm of originality. Internally it has many attractions; the most interesting of which, however, are not strictly its own, unless a jewel can be said to belong to the casket in which it is kept. The general features of the interior are of the same character as others that we have seen, but probably a little darker than the average. As usual, there are huge monoliths for columns. Fifty six of them are forty-eight feet high and four feet diameter, each as large as a small factory chimney, of polished Finland granite; their bases and capitals are Corinthian, and of bronze; there is, however, a profusion of precious metals here; the screen is of solid silver, wrought partly from contributions of the people, but chiefly from silver utensils, captured by the Cossacks in 1813 or 1814; about the same time General Kutozoff recaptured from the French a large portion of the booty with which they were laden, and sent it here, with instructions that it be made into statues of the four Evangelists; so that this time it was not Paul who

received the fruits of a robbery. Our Lady of Kasan seems to be decidedly favourable to soldiers, for the chief part of her relics consist of military trophies, which are hung about in profusion. Old banners of many nations, Turkish standards, Persian silk, and occasionally a French colour hang quietly here, after their stormy adventures, just as many a wild soldier is overtaken with either remorse or some other misfortune, and becoming a monk, ends his days quietly in a church. It is a stirring sight to see, amongst the murderous looking weapons of all sorts that are stacked about the walls and columns here, a large number of keys, each of which represents the bondage of either kingdom or city whose freedom has fallen into Russian hands; some of them are so old that the people have forgotten that they ever possessed a lock to match; but still they are there, and, like the stripes on a slaves's back, it would be more grateful to our feelings if they were kept concealed.

The great General Kutozoff, to whom we have referred, added many to their number, and earned a handsome tomb here, which is an object of especial devotion amongst the

people. It is evident that there is a great remnant of old Jewish form in their religion, for no women are allowed to share in the more sacred solemnities, and at this church not even the Empress herself can pass behind the silver screen.

It would perhaps have the effect of improving the priests in matters of costume if they did allow the ladies a little more share in their business, for we found at another church men going about in long black cloaks and caps, which have not by any means an attractive effect. The church we speak of is in a dingy condition, and not nearly so brilliant as those last described. It was erected at the end of the Nevskoi Prospect, by Peter the Great, as a receptacle for the bones of a General Alexander, who, after being planted a good while in the earth, had grown into a saint. The cunning Czar knowing how barren his favourite capital was of attraction, removed the esteemed saint from his rest at *Gorodichetche* in hopes that the hearts of the Russians would follow him to his new home; but the story says that the new home did not suit the saint any better than the people, and he went back again,

sans ceremonie, to his old lodgings. The Emperor, who evidently was not afraid of saints, had him sent back again quickly, and by a gentle hint to the priests, and probably a double lock on the door, kept him there until he got reconciled, which was perhaps much facilitated, if he was a saint of taste, by the handsome monument erected over him. It is a solid silver pyramid, five yards high, guarded by silver knights as large as life. The whole tomb containing, it is said, five thousand pounds weight of the precious metal. It is an immense place, and forms one of the head quarters of the Russian priesthood. The *Metropolitan* or Archbishop resides here, and presides over the monastery attached to it.

As a variety, we may next visit a religious house of the opposite sex. The *Smolnoi* Nunnery, which was dedicated by the Empress Marie to the education of eight hundred daughters of nobles, part of whom are, as we say, "on the foundation." The whole building is exceedingly plain, but in good taste, being chiefly white marble and gold internally, with fine blue domes spotted with gold stars on the outside. It is situated at the end of Sunday

Street, just at the bend of the river on the extreme east end of the town, at least three miles away from our hotel. There are upwards of thirty churches in St. Petersburg, but we shall only mention one more, but that one is of great interest, for besides being the end of our category, it is the final resting place of Russia's glory. It will be remembered that the Citadel stands upon an island in the centre of the city. Here it was that Peter commenced his labours, and here he finished them. He rests now in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, with all the pomp of monarchy exchanged for a simple stone sarcophagus, covered with a pall, and enclosed by an iron railing. All of his successors lie beside him, and their monuments are equally unostentatious. We could moralize feelingly upon this, for a monarch's tomb is fertile in thoughtful suggestions. Here rests the daughter of the late Emperor Nicholas, who seems to have been as great a favourite as our poor Princess Charlotte in England. But the object of especial interest at the moment was the tomb of her father, upon which were growing some plants, carefully watched by an attendant, who kindly gave me a cutting from

one of them. It was well meant, and would have been a pleasing memento, but it died. These churches stand within the Citadel, and are strongly military in their character. The interior is crowded with military trophies and relics of the same sort as those in the Kazan Church. One particularly attracted our attention; it is a white Turkish flag, upon which there is the impress of a bloody hand, whether of defender or captor we do not know, but in either case it remains as a record of the severity of the struggle by which it was lost.

Before leaving the Citadel, we may mention the guns, as they are rather prominent characters here, and a hundred of them point their noses over the battlements which surround the space upon which we are now standing; part of the outwork, however, stretches over to the larger island of Aptekarskoi, of which this little one of St. Petersburg is only, as it were, a fragment. Within a short distance there is still in good preservation the first palace that was erected in the city. Its magnitude, when contrasted with the Winter Palace, suffers considerably, as it is only about twenty feet square and eight feet high, containing sitting-room,

dining-room, and bedroom for the great Czar Peter, who built it partly with his own hands, as his residence during the foundation of the city. It is a little low cottage, with a small verandah all round, and is now used as a chapel, in which devout Russians offer up their prayers for their great father. There is a boat here which was made by him in his shipbuilding days, and is another example of his apparent determination that whatever he undertook should in some degree be done by himself. He surely must have known the old proverb, or at least felt its truth. So great is the reverence felt by the nation for this interesting hut, that they have built it over, and it now stands secure against wind and weather, in the same way that our Shakspeare's house is going to be some day.

CHAP. XXX.

The public buildings of St. Petersburg are both numerous and magnificent, many of them devoted to charitable purposes on a large scale, many of them literary, and some scientific; one of the latter was highly esteemed by Peter, and we saw, in the private laboratory which he had in the building, many examples of his skill in turning and engraving. He was an extraordinary emperor, and did not seem to make any worse a monarch for being a labouring man. There is in this institution a fine collection of books: we were told 100,000 volumes, besides a large number of manuscripts, of great value, from Siberia and Eastern Russia. The costumes and implements of the various classes of people in the Russian dominions are also shown upon models of the people themselves, life size. The horse of Peter the Great serves as his own model, for his skin is stuffed, and stands in one

of these apartments fully equipped. Amongst the most remarkable natural relics belonging to this institution is the skeleton of that animated mountain, the Mammoth. An elephant is placed by its side, to serve as a scale by which to judge of its enormous size; it was found in 1803, in Siberia, thawed out of an iceberg, in which it must have lain hundreds of years.

From hence we went to the Hotel des Mines, when we had an opportunity of educating ourselves to work in the mines of Siberia, with advantage, for there is a model of one as large as life, constructed out of real minerals, stratified as they are in the earth; this, with a splendid collection of both metals and stones, is used as a means of preparing embryo engineers and managers for the government mines: it is another of those useful legacies which Peter has left to his people.

About three quarters of a mile from the Admiralty, beyond the Kazan Church, and upon the same side of the Nevskoi Prospect stands the Gostinnoi Dvor, of St. Petersburg, the great hive in which the busiest bees of the city congregate. It is a square mass of shops and bazaars, which, from their compact con-

dition, should all be said to be in one building, although the interior, as usual, is cut up into rectangular masses by numbers of small streets crossing each other, having upon both sides more shops. The best of them, however, front the main streets, and are under a piazza, which is formed by a colonnade surrounding the building. The number of stalls in a large market may give some idea of the abundance of shops here, but the number of checks in a plaid shawl will be nearer the truth, for there are thousands of them, five or six we were told. The whole mass occupies the angle formed by the junction of the Nevskoi and *Bolshaia SSattovaïa,* and is as it were a little nation, independent of either Russian or any other, but formed out of chips of them all. The description we gave of the one at Moscow applies equally well to this, but it is larger, and the divers wares are more concentrated into rows. The various articles of costume have each their especial row; it is not merely shops, but rows of shops, and truly, to get a suit of clothes is a work of no small labour. The hat row, bonnet row, cloak row and boot row are all important bazaars, and the variety and

beauty of these wares is wonderful, a cloak of two hundred guineas is an ordinary affair; and boots! why, in boots one might spend three fortunes! Who does not know Kazan boots? I bought a pair for myself, my husband bought a pair for himself, and they are both so excessively beautiful that we are always longing for an excuse to wear them, but then they do not fit about the ankles, but that does not matter, as Russian boots never do; and then, I have a nice little pair to slip over my walking boots, with a white lining of fur that looks like the wool of a pet lamb that has had its hair curled; it is one soft mass of little twisted woolly rings, to which I owe some gratitude for warm feet on many a cold day, both before and since they left their native land. It must always be borne in mind that a Gostinnoi Dvor is for better class goods, as there are two other places for commoner sorts; but if any one wants to escape that fascinating disease "shopping," they must not come here. Really I should have been ruined in another day or two if I had spent the time in this place; first some magnificent gold lace caps for presents to one's friends, then a bit of jewellery as a present for one's self,

then some other thing for some other body. Altogether I say to future travellers take no money with you to the Gostinnoi Dvor. The incessant importunity of the merchants to induce people to buy things for which they have no earthly use is clamorous in the extreme, and the immense number of them in such close proximity gives the place a Babylonian effect that is anything but intelligible to those who cannot understand Russ. The long narrow alleys of shops have parts of the space covered over, and parts showing bits of the sky, like the centre of Covent Garden Market with a piece of the roof off. Under the roofed parts are suspended the lamps and saints which are supposed to act as moral policemen, and prevent robbery. The Russians, however, like others, will occasionally steal, but as we don't know much of that phase of their life we will leave it uncontinued.

The ten thousand merchants must eat each day ten thousand dinners, and somebody must cook them; now, as the merchants have something else to do, there are attached to this vast place plenty of little restaurateurs, who, at the proper time, begin to ply their useful calling;

but the peculiarity is that they do not any of them supply a complete meal. Imagine a vendor coming round in England with hot beef steaks, another with boiled potatoes, and a third with pudding. To take a comfortable dinner one must have them altogether, only the difference in the Gostinnoi Dvor is that the viands are more soupy, more oily, and by no means coincident. The Peripatetic Somovar is, however, most popular. Quass does a tolerable business; but the solids are indescribable. Sometimes we found it rather difficult to make inquiries, or at least to understand the directions we received in reply, as not one of the whole ten thousand occurred to us who could speak anything but Russian; in these emergencies we always waited patiently until the grey coat of an officer came in sight, and then attacked him in French, and were never disappointed in finding an able and willing guide. The military men all speak French, and are as obliging as they are numerous. There is, as usual, a large proportion of Asiatic merchandise here, with the merchants in their national costume, which gives a masquerading, fancy fair sort of effect to the place totally at variance

with its real permanent character. Among the other Russian goods to be sold and bought we found the Somavar Row, and after some complicated instructions from the vendor, with regard to lighting it, we marched off with one in our possession, which we saw no reasons for doubting would boil as well in England as there, and we have had no reason to doubt it yet. We had, however, to send it home by water in charge of a friend.

We have perhaps said enough of this market, though not more than it deserves, and have mentioned that it is the first class emporium, though, of course, you are as liable to be cheated there as anywhere else, but then it is by respectable people, and "perhaps the pleasure is as great in being cheated as to cheat." There must, of course, be a similar luxury provided for the poorer people, and they find it in Garden Street, within a short distance, at the *Apraxin Rinok*. Hitherto we have been amongst the Russians of St. Petersburg, that is, capitalized Russians, with all the civilization of dress coats and uniforms; but here we are amongst Russian Russians, with all the rusticity of shaggy beards and sheep skins. Probably this market is as

interesting as anything in the capital, for it gives so much insight into the manners of the people; for instance, there is a row devoted entirely to decorations for weddings, tinsel crowns and garlands, to add splendour to the ceremony. All these things are necessities of lower Russian life, and, as such, deserve attention. By way of contrast, we may visit the rag rows, where you find the most wretched collection of rubbish that could be offered to reasonable beings for sale. What they could possibly do with the scraps of cloth, bits of string, and shreds of cast off apparel, used to be a source of constant wonder to us, for no beggar in England would think of them in that state, except at so much a hundredweight for the paper mill. Some one must have bought them, however, for there they were, each fragment ticketed, and taking the chance of being purchased upon its own responsibility.

We have still another market to see in the immediate neighbourhood; it is called the *Tshukin Dvor*, and is what we would call a poultry market. A vast collection of booths, containing immense varieties of birds, destined to finish their career at the table of the St.

Petersburg gourmands. The chief point worthy of remark here is that the birds are supplied with snow, in winter, instead of water, to drink, the latter, of course, would not remain liquid. The birds themselves, when killed, are then frozen stiff. Hares, deer and other animals are sent from the country, also frozen solid, in natural attitudes, to be cut up only with the axe and saw, like so much wood. Doves are, however, exempt from slaughter, as they are a religious symbol, and enjoy a roving life over the heads of their less fortunate companions in the booths. They are fed and tamed by the shopkeepers, who would as soon think of letting all his other birds live as killing one of these.

There are four theatres in St. Petersburg; two of the largest are in the same part of the city as these bazaars, and devoted to nothing but Russian plays. We went to one of them with our Russian friends, and saw a troop of the ordinary actors, who are slaves belonging to the Emperor, and especially educated for the purpose; in fact, all theatres in Russia are maintained by the Government, which ensures their excellence; they are all kept in good order, and commodiously constructed. The performance was very

good, and we had an excellent opportunity of judging of the effect of the language, for there is no place where the character of a language is better heard than in a theatre. In this case we were surprised by its flowing softness, so different from what would be expected from its hard appearance in print.

CHAP. XXXI.

The royal family of Russia is, like others, possessed of country mansions as well as city houses; that of Tzarsko Selo is about fifteen miles south east of St. Petersburg. The approach to the palace has little that is remarkable about it. The principal entrance is by an Egyptian gateway, decorated by many small towers. The chief feature of this magnificent palace is its great length, which is twelve hundred feet. Formerly the whole exterior was covered with sheet gold, but there is very little of it remaining, excepting upon the dome, which is still perfect. We entered by an archway into a whitewashed court-yard, and applied fruitlessly at the numerous doors which opened into it, but received the same reply at them all, "that as the Emperor was expected next day from Moscow, no one could be admitted on any account, as it would interfere with their cleaning

and preparations." Of course we were much dispirited at this announcement, and tried our old panacea for all objections—the rouble—but this time with no effect, for there were three gentlemen in sight who were evidently on the same errand, and shared the same fate as ourselves. Two were Frenchmen, under the guidance of the third, who was Russian; and although he made himself known at the gate, was still unable to procure admission for his friends. They say misfortune finds strange companions; in this case we joined common cause, and soon became well acquainted. He, on learning our predicament, sent off to the Governor for an order to admit us, and during the time we were waiting he politely said that he believed we had met in Italy a few months before, and it turned out to be so, much to our advantage; but we did not lose any time, even during the interval, for we soon perceived that the presence of this gentleman was of importance, and that it was sufficient to be mistaken for a portion of his party to enable us to run through a large number of rooms, and leave less to be done when the order did arrive.

To describe the whole palace in detail would be to write a book as large as the one already written, for the number and beauty of its attractions internally are amazing. The exterior is not so remarkable, as it is deprived of the gold which was intended to form its chief decoration. It has the effect of a large edifice badly painted in gaudy colours. One feature, however, is remarkable, a mound raised from the garden to the level of the upper floor, forming an inclined plane, up which the Empress Catherine could drive to the bedrooms, without the labour of going up stairs.

The rooms of the interior are fitted up in complete character of various styles. The Chinese room is genuine Chinese, not merely in appearance, but in reality. The Amber room is real amber, and the immense masses used in its construction (for it is literally *all* amber) are enough to drive an ordinary jeweller wild with envy. One room is wainscotted entirely with lapis lazuli; another paved (we can scarcely call it floored) with ebony, inlaid with devices of mother-of-pearl, and we believe that, without exception, it makes the handsomest floor we ever saw.

The banqueting room is all gold, and that of no mean thickness. The chapel is half gold, for the ceiling is one solid sheet, and the rest distributed thickly over other parts; everything is superbly magnificent, and we are really at a loss for words powerful enough to convey through all this satiety of splendour any vivid idea of the amazing profusion of precious material; it seemed as though the place was built to show how much money could be concentrated in one building, and yet, in the midst of all this, the Emperor Alexander's own room was as simple as a room could be. The people think of him with an affection that is almost pathetic, and preserve everything in his chamber just as he left it the last time it was occupied by him.

The gardens surrounding the palace are a monument of industry and order. They are of immense extent, nearly eighteen miles in circumference, most elaborately laid out and ornamented, and still there is never a grain of gravel out of its place, a weed where no weed should be, on an untidy bed in the most out of the way corner. It seems as though nature had been taught how to grow according to orders, and to be always on the *qui vive* for inspection.

At a short distance from the palace is a Gothic building of romantic appearance, which turns out to be the Armoury. An exquisite collection of ancient weapons and curiosities of modern times. The variety and value of the arms add interest to them, besides the tasteful manner in which they are arranged. Amongst the varied treasures are some saddles, almost covered with jewels, some of them of immense value; but as each one has its own story, and each story so well worth telling, we will be impartial, and not relate any since we cannot tell all. This place and the whole of the grounds are under the charge of an army of soldiers, invalid pensioners; in fact, it serves as a sort of Greenwich for St. Petersburg, though at infinitely greater cost to the nation. The old fellows were decorated with plenty of medals, and we found one who had been at Paris in former days when the French and Russian were not so friendly. Still, under the guidance of our new friend, we went to see the large elephants which had been lately sent as presents from the Shah of Persia to the late Emperor, and notwithstanding my particular desire that they should be allowed to remain

unexhibited, our chaperon insisted on treating us to the display, and very much against their will the poor beasts were poked out of their houses into the courtyard with long sharp hooks by picturesque Persians in their native costume. The performance was with difficulty commenced, but, before long, it terminated rather abruptly, by one of the Mahouts accidentally catching his hook fast in the ear of one of the animals, which set up such a roar as drove us all to a retreat *sans cérémonie*. Our next business would have been to go home, but here again our friends stepped in and invited us to accompany them in their intended drive to Paulofsky, about eight miles distant, at which place there are two palaces and extensive gardens; but the chief attraction on this occasion was a grand concert which was to take place in a large room attached to the railway station, and we were highly gratified by hearing Strauss and his orchestra perform several beautiful pieces. There is a railway hence to St. Petersburg, and the multitude of attractions provided for the people here, such as cafés, bazaars, music, promenade in the grounds, and other things of a similar description, seem to

indicate that this is a sort of compound of Hampton Court, Richmond and the Crystal Palace; in fact, the recreative excursion for the people. As usual at such places there was a rush for the train. When all was over, and we had to take leave of the kind Russian, to whom we already were so much indebted, wondering at the same time who he was, for his presence was evidently of considerable weight, we were relieved of any further anxiety by the gentleman himself presenting his card, upon which we read "*R. P——off, Gentilhomme de la Chambre de sa Majesté l'Empereur,*" and taking out his pencil he inscribed upon it a number of Russian hieroglyphics, which were to be our guide to him, if, at any time, we required his services, which he kindly placed at our disposal, even to the extent of procuring us admission to a state ball. Highly pleased with our good fortune, and grateful to our new friend, we took leave, but had no further opportunity of troubling him, or renewing the acquaintance.

The last of these imperial country seats which we shall mention is that of *Peterhof,* situated about sixteen miles from the capital, upon the

south shore of the Gulf of Finland, and nearly opposite Cronstadt. It stands on a declivity, clothed by a forest of fine trees. The palace is indebted to its situation rather than to its architectural beauty for its attraction; its elevation above the margin of the water, and the commanding prospect before it, must have rendered it, in that respect at least, a delightful residence. Notwithstanding this, however, it did not retain its hold upon the military monarch, Nicholas, and has never since regained its former dignity. The gardens are both extensive and beautiful, laid out with an evident leaning towards French taste; but, unfortunately for us, many of the bronze statues with which the gardens and fountains abounded were being boxed in for the approaching winter. We, however, saw sufficient to convince us that there were considerable pretensions to splendour in the place. The fountains are evidently of great importance, for the centre flight of steps up the ascent to the palace is flanked by a series of marble cascades, over which the water pours in sheets from the top to the bottom, and the numerous jets out of large basins must have a very fine effect. At the foot of the garden,

upon the shore, there is a timber quay, to which steamers run from St. Petersburg during the summer months. There are a few small guns upon it, which look as though they were intended rather for ornament than use.

Within these grounds, which, from their name, it will be supposed, owed their origin to the great Peter, there exists a small building at Monplaiser. This was his residence, and it was here that he died. We have followed him from the foundation of his capital, upon a dreary island, in the midst of a morass. We have traced his hand throughout the stupendous edifices of St. Petersburg, and his mind in the prosperity of an immense nation, and now we find that he who commenced his career in one little hut on the Neva, finished it in another, within sight of the city, which owed its existence to him.

In consequence of the distance, we had been compelled to indulge in an equipage of more convenience than a droshky, and were supposed to have secured one of the best Istvostchiks in the capital, according to the opinion of those who recommended him. But, to give the reader an idea of the size of the wood in which the

palace is placed, he wandered about with us until he lost himself and us too, and it was not until we had almost given way to desperation that we emerged into the road at Strelna, a place we mentioned in our first approach to the capital. After all this anxiety, we wanted some refreshment, and stopped to get it at a little public house by the way side; hard cheese and black bread were all we found, with the exception of the everlasting Russian smell, which drove away our appetites and sent us off at a canter, through the Riga gate, home to Miss Benson's.

Everybody knows that there is a place called Cronstadt, which is situated somewhere before you get to St. Petersburg, because Sir Charles got there, and no further, and my husband says he did right in not trying. Well, Cronstadt is about twenty miles nearer England, and serves as the outlet for both the peace and war of the nation; it is in reality the front door to Russia, for two-thirds of the trade of the whole nation passes through it, yet the number of its inhabitants is only about ten thousand.

Its importance arises chiefly from the Bar, which stretches across the Gulf a little above this point, and prevents vessels which draw

more than nine feet of water from passing up to the capital. All the cargoes have consequently to be discharged here, for which purpose handsome granite quays, large warehouses, and capacious docks are provided. Amongst the latter is a graving dock capable of holding thirty ships of war at one time. The mole which protects the harbour from bad weather is upwards of half a mile long. There is, however, protection of a formidable character against storms of another kind. The forts which line the channel are arranged so that they fire zig zag across each other all the way up, and one at the top faces directly down the stream, so that anything attempting to pass must not only run the gauntlet through the batteries at the side, but meet the fire of the end one directly in the teeth for the whole distance. As an instance of the extensive fortifications provided at this place, we may mention a piece of land at the Arsenal of, we should think, at least two acres in extent, which was literally covered with unmounted guns, laid side by side, presenting a wide expanse of cast iron furrows. These did a great deal to lessen our surprise at the difficulty in taking the place,

and must, no doubt, have done much to increase the confidence of the Russians at the time when it was wanted.

Sir Charles Napier had been staying at Miss Benson's shortly before our arrival, and after his interview with the Grand Duke Constantine, had related an account of his reception. Part of the dialogue consisted of an inquiry from the Duke as to "why Sir Charles did not come in?" to which he replied, in the Scotch American manner, "Why did you not come out?" The sight of Cronstadt answered both questions at once to our minds, although there *was* a way on the north side, by which some small English ships crept round the back of the forts on a sounding expedition, in the night, and could have crept further had they known in time that the Russian noble, who should have driven the channel full of piles, had sunk the money into the depths of his own pocket. None of these forts could resist an attack in the rear, and *this* the stronghold of the empire was within an ace of being blown to pieces; but our ships turned back cautiously, before daylight, after approaching within a few yards of the point that would have let out the secret, and before night gave

them another opportunity the Emperor Nicholas himself was on the spot, blocking it up with sunken ships, and planting guns almost with his own hands, for we were told that he superintended the whole operation himself, and did not leave the spot until the channel was made impassable, and he immediately gave orders for three new forts, which were in full progress when we were there.

During the winter the communication with the *capital, Orainenbaum,* and *Sestrabek,* is maintained by high roads across the ice, the tracks being marked by chequered posts set up in each of the three lines; but it is in summer the chief importance of Cronstadt comes to life amidst the bustle of shipping and the activity of workmen, thousands of whom crowd to the place during the fine season for commercial purposes. There is always, however, an immense staff constantly engaged at the dockyards. At the time of our visit they were working night and day, busily employed converting all their sailing ships of war into steamers—an idea that had probably been only lately considered necessary, and appeared more like preparation for hostilities than the conclusion of a war.

CHAP. XXXII.

Hitherto we have been conducting the reader about in the Asmodean style, flying through the air and pouncing down upon spots to which we would draw his attention; but now, being more domestically inclined, we request the pleasure of his company on a droshky, for a gossiping drive through the city. We might, perhaps, have preferred a walk, but there are two serious objections to that mode of making a tour in St. Petersburg; first, the distances are too great; and, second, the pavement is in such a bad condition, that we cannot, out of humanity, keep our companion tramping on it so long as would be required to walk over the ground. The thumps of the stiff little droshky are bad enough, but keep your eyes sharp about you, and at the rattling speed we go it will soon be over. Well, here we are at the corner of the Admiralty, and calling out to our istvost-

schik the words "*na prava,*" (we have learnt plenty of Russian by this time it must be remembered), he turns to the right, and tumbles into the Admiralty Square, across which we dart diagonally (it is at least half a mile), and then find ourselves entering the Nevskoi Prospeckt. The reader knows what that is, or if he does not, he has skipped a great deal of this book which he ought to have read. Well, now we are here, it is a fine street, with immense and beautiful houses at the sides, a clear blue sky for a roof, but a most dreadful confusion of wood and mud for a floor; it seems almost as though the surface of the street was trying to take the form of the waves of the watery foundation upon which it is made, becoming, in fact, a stereotyped storm, over which the splendid equipages with their three and four horses each are dashing away without the slightest regard to the state of the pavement. It is, perhaps, a mile to the Fontanka Canal, and the houses on the way are like little cities in themselves. Over the canal there is a noble bridge, upon which we found our old friends, the horses from the Monte Cavello. Still further on we kept driving, with our eyes wandering about amongst

the well dressed people and their varied costumes, and peering at the fine shops, whose wares are advertised in a way that enables one to run and read, for there is upon each sign a portrait of the articles in which the vendor deals. This *may* be an evidence of art in the great city, but we rather think it is to compensate for the illiterate state of the poorer classes. We would like to drive to the end of the street, which is three miles long, in order to show the contrast between the sheep skinned Mujiks, who live at one end, and the ermined noble who lives at the other, but, as our time is short, we will be content with saying that they *are* there, and then we return to the heart of the town again. It is no easy matter to turn an istvostchik out of his direction, as he always sets off without asking which way he must go, and the usual plan is either to pull him by the ear or give him a knock with a stick upon the side to which he must turn. There are, however, Russian words for "right," "left," and "stop," all of which were included in our acquired vocabulary, and turned out very useful on many occasions; in fact, our good fortune in acquiring the small stock we obtained was enhanced by

obtaining it early, before we had time to fall into the troubles that befell some of our fellow lodgers at Miss Benson's. One or two got lost on the droshky, without the power either to stop the driver or tell him they wanted to go home; whilst others, in consequence of their strange behaviour on discovering that English was not the current tongue in the city, had got themselves committed to the charge of a *boutosnik*. The policemen of all countries are, next to the tailors, held in less respect than, probably, any other calling. We cannot pretend to give a reason for it, and, even if we could, it would not change our opinion that the custom is a bad one; a policeman, a gend'arme and a boutosnik are each different species of the same order, and, no doubt, contain many estimable specimens of humanity. The boutosnik is, however, a gentle, inoffensive animal, although his appearance is anything but peaceful. A bulky grey coat, tied round a body of some sort, and surmounted by a profusion of beard, over the top of which two little eyes peep out under a penthouse of cap; his hands contain an immense halberd, of a ferocious character. His general duties appear to be of much the same

character as those of our own guardians of the peace, that is, to walk about the streets in the daytime; at night we never could find out what any of them do, but we know that he is partly relieved from watching the houses by a Mujik, kept for the purpose at each dwelling, called the *Dvornik*. The watchmen at every alternate house take it in turns about to watch, or rather sleep, at the doors through the night, according to the municipal regulations, and many of these poor wretches are found frozen to death after a sudden frost. The one at Miss Benson's was one morning discovered coiled up before the stove, and, of course, received a reprimand for deserting his post; but he explained by saying that he really did not know how he got there. He supposed the *Dumavoy* had done it to get him into trouble. This Dumavoy is the Russian Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, who does all the unaccountable things which happen to the lower orders. One boy we knew, with an unconscionably rough head, informed us that, having frequently tried to comb it, he had given up the task in despair, as he found the Dumavoy opposing him more and more at each attempt. This opposition of the Dumavoy to

cleanliness is not confined to St. Petersburg, but is a regular · determined and universal crusade of his all over the kingdom, and its effects are not only visible upon the persons of the Mujiks, but occasionally find their way to those of higher grades in society.

We have already mentioned that the Russians do not destroy pigeons, and the result is that they crowd the street in flocks so tame and conscious of their safety that a horse may almost kick them away with his foot before they will move; one of their favourite haunts is in the undisturbed quietness of the gutter which runs down the middle of the great Nevskoi. The whole of this street is paved with wood, in very bad order, slightly sloped from the footpaths at the sides towards the said channel in the middle, which is perfectly neutral ground, as the drivers always keep their own sides, down one side of the street and up the other, and it is neither safe nor pleasant to break through the rule, if occasion requires you to cross.

Most of the other streets are paved with granite, the surface of which presents the same variety as that of the Nevskoi, and at night it is not

prudent for people of imperfect vision to wander far from the limited region of gas light. Old King Frost is a serious antagonist to the supply of both gas and water, as he freezes the pipes, unless they are buried deep beyond his reach; the consequence is that there is but a small portion of the town illuminated, and not any of it supplied with water, the inhabitants supply themselves from the Neva, which is renowned for its purity and salubrity: it, however, requires one to be accustomed to it before partaking too freely.

On the banks of the river and at the mouth of the Fontanka canal there is a place of recreation for the people called the Summer Gardens, which they make good use of at the proper season, for there is a festival held here called the "Wife Market," to which pretty peasant girls are brought and arranged in rows, to be selected as brides by many who take that method of commencing their courtship. The garden is surrounded by a large iron railing, with gilded tops, and across the canal, in the immediate vicinity, there is a chain bridge, of the same material, decorated in a similar manner; though, since the time of Catherine, their authoress, much of their splendour has

worn away: still, however, the gilt stars on the bridge and the tops of the railing are sufficient to give them a brilliant effect.

It will be an appropriate transition to take the reader from the Summer Gardens to the Summer Islands, which, as we have formerly stated, lie amongst the mouths of the river. To do this we must cross another, but much more important, iron bridge, called the *Nicholaiski Most*, which spans the Neva from the English quay to the Vassili Ostrov (the Island of Basil) by eight arches, the ironwork for which was executed by a large engineering firm in Liverpool. There is a beautiful little temple upon it, near one end, built of polished granite, to which all the passers by pay homage. From the centre of this bridge, looking up the river there is one of the finest views in the city. The interminable façade of palaces stretches for a mile in length upon the south bank of the river, with the citadel upon the opposite side, whilst down the stream you look outwards to the Gulf of Finland and the warehouses of the Vassili Ostrov. There are other bridges over the river, but they are of boats, and are moved away when the winter sets in.

Having now crossed the bridge, we will make the best of our way to the Summer Islands, and the best is bad enough, for, would you believe it, there we found the Corduroy Road again, in all its perfection. The islands themselves are numerous, and decrease in size as they get further from the city, and one would almost be inclined to say decrease in civilization, for wolves and bears are not uncommon visitors; the principal features of these are that the summer residences of the nobility are built upon the larger ones, in what they consider to be an imitation of our English country houses, though how far that can be obtained by a log hut of only moderate pretensions may be imagined; some of them, however, are exceedingly comfortable looking, well built, picturesque places, having delightful gardens, hothouses and gravel walks. Conspicuous above them all is that of the Emperor, which alone is built of stone, and occupies a beautiful position. The various classes of the population assort themselves, and hold their pic-nics upon different islands, just as one set of cockneys go to Richmond and another to Greenwich. Most of them are connected by numerous bridges; but a large number of boats

are constantly plying about, with either visitors or residents, especially in the summer evenings, when the sun scarcely disappears long enough to change the name from day to night.

We have spent long enough time upon them now to make us desire to return to Miss Benson's, and, driving away through the long avenues of shrubs, over bridges, and at last through streets again, we rush across the Nicolaiski Most, turn to the right down the English quay, and pull up at home. We say "at home," and it begins to waken up a hundred ideas of another place associated with the name—of the long weary days that must elapse before we see it, and the hundreds of perilous miles over which we had come from it, and over which, according to present appearances, we must return. Even if we had not been in some measure bent upon going, there were warnings enough to set us on the alert. The housekeepers began to put in their double windows. The heavy cloaks began to be making their appearance, and if in riding through the streets, we did not take a close carriage, or ventured to put an unprotected nose out of the window, it was in danger of being nipped off by the frost. All these signs

betoken approaching winter, and hastened our preparations; and these, to English people, were of rather a formidable character. We are accustomed at home to say, "What time does the train go to-day," and then to pack up and be off without any further trouble; just imagine then the difficulties of visiting three or four offices, coaxing and bribing three or four people, and after all not being able to get away from the country without advertising three times in a newspaper, Russian and German. All this occupies about a fortnight, and if a stranger goes into Russia for a short stay, one of the first things he has to do is to inform the public, through the press, when he is going away again. Many of our friends, on hearing that we were upon the eve of departure, came in an alarmed state to beg that we would never think of returning through the wilderness, and converted themselves into a committee of inquiry for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the roads. The results were numerous, and none of them agreeable; first, that the road was in a dreadful state, with wet and frost; then, that there had been a dreadful murder committed, some people having been robbed and killed in their own

carriage. This was found to be true, and very discouraging, but as there was no other way of getting home, we were left without any alternative but the steamboats, which run periodically to Lubeck and Stettin, and were the usual means of transit to and from St. Petersburg; in fact, all who came from Western Europe did so by them, and intended returning the same way. But then they were all gentlemen; we only saw one lady traveller in Russia, and she was an American, who had most probably become a good sailor in crossing the Atlantic. I, however, had such a dread of the sea, that after many deliberations, and in direct opposition to the advice of our friends, we determined on returning by the same way that brought us here, and turned our attention to the poor old carriage, which had during all this time been lying at the coachbuilder's, with its broken spokes repaired, new springs where old ones had failed, and renovated in all injured places. We occupied a portion of the time whilst waiting for the final permission to depart, in providing new ropes, improved fittings, and other matters which our experience had proved to be necessary. One old gentleman, a captain in the navy, was

dreadfully alarmed at our temerity, and insisted that we should only be wantonly giving the wolves a feast by intruding into their dominions. We received a great deal of his sympathy, as we were almost the last of the visitors remaining at Miss Benson's. The dinner table began to look very deserted, and the place to be more cheerless every day; this was painfully perceptible, as there had been such a number of social people staying with us; and, after the day's fatigue, it was exceedingly pleasant to assemble in the drawing-room (which was common to all the guests), and gossip about our day's adventures. We were a motley group, people of all nations, and the difficulties into which we fell were consequently various and interesting. Some had to relate their misfortunes with those perpetual sources of discomfort, the droshkies. One, perhaps, had bought something, and paid ten times its value; another had picked up some rare curiosity, and could not explain what it was. Altogether, it was very pleasant, and our purchases were fertile sources of amusement. At last it became the fashion for the vendors to bring their goods to the hotel, and by making good use of my Gostinnoi Dvor experience, I

got quite a reputation for Russian, which was heightened by my wise precaution never to say too much, because as I was frequently called upon to be bargainer for a number of our fellow visitors, it would not have gone round with sufficient variety.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The reader must not forget that during all this time Russia has been enjoying itself in a most demonstrative way, and the concluding festival was due on the fourteenth of October, in St. Petersburg, one day before our departure. Everybody knows what a procession is at a royal entry, even if it is only the Queen going to Parliament, and what a contest there is for the best places in the best windows overlooking the route. All this applies equally in Russia. This was, however, no ordinary occasion, but one that can only take place once in a reign, the Emperor's first entry into his capital. He had been staying since his return from Moscow, in the palace of *Tzars ko selo*, where it will be remembered we preceded him by one day. Since then we had occupied ourselves with other and more domesticated matters, and were more fully prepared to enjoy a little

royalty. We should, no doubt, have had considerable difficulty in procuring good places had it not been for the kindness of the friends whom we have already referred to. Their residence is at the corner of the Kazan Ploschad, in the Nevskoi Prospeckt, down which the procession had to pass, and they placed at our disposal excellent places in the front of the house.

Accordingly, in the morning, they sent their carriage early, in order that we might be rescued in time from the immense crowd, and enabled to pass the barriers which closed all the streets on the line after an early hour. We dashed away as long as we could, but soon slackened to a creep through the living stream that was rushing in the same direction. The mounted Cossacks, in their beautiful blue uniform, were scouring about in all directions upon their sturdy little horses, and before we had been long in our seats at the window, the Nevskoi was totally closed, clean swept like magic, sprinkled over with sawdust, and lined with a wall of soldiers on each side; there were a hundred thousand of them, and such a number for the two miles in one straight line

was a sight that we can never hope to see again. Presently the loud booming of nobody knows how many cannon announced the arrival of their august Majesties and the Court at the Railway Station. Presently, amidst the hum of expectation, and the eager rushing of the impatient crowd, there appeared in the distance a moving mass of colour; the shouting of the people came rolling down to us through the living avenue, and presently we, too, joined in the cry that was extorted from every one by the brilliancy of the spectacle.

Troop after troop, with the most magnificent uniforms, upon equally magnificent men, carriage after carriage, all gilt in profusion, and in the midst of it all the Emperor himself, dressed in a superb military uniform, and followed by his two sons; one dressed as a Hussar and the other as a Cossack. Fortunately for us some interruption caused the calvacade to halt whilst he was exactly before our window, which gave us an opportunity of criticising him for several minutes, and immediately afterwards he alighted in the Kazan Square, in order to pray at the church, so that by merely crossing the rooms we could look out of the windows at that side,

and had thus probably one of the best *stands* in the city. It is almost impossible to describe accurately the appearance of a person dressed up for a festival, but we are at least safe in saying that the Czar is a fine martial looking man, with an intelligent countenance and expressive eye. The sons were so concealed by the peculiarity of their costume, that it was almost impossible to make out what they were like. The three were kept isolated from the rest, a large clear space being maintained around the Emperor during the whole procession. . The Empress's carriage was a magnificent vehicle, being nearly all glass; what little framework was necessary was covered with gold; this, as well as many of the others, we understood, had been constructed for the occasion. The monotonous salute which the right hand of the Emperor was perpetually making was only a little improved in the constant see-saw of the poor Empress, who was oscillating from side to side in a manner that must have become positively painful before the end of their journey. There was something very touching in the hearty cheers of the Mujiks, who, amid all the splendour, were as

much Mujiks as ever, and brought with them loaves of black bread, which were continually thrust into the Empress's carriage.

There was something very imposing in the whole sight, and it was rendered almost solemn by the continued performance of their beautiful National Anthem, *Boje Zara Charni*—God preserve the Emperor! To attempt a detailed description of the varied costumes that lent such grandeur to the pageant, would be to weary the reader with a chapter that must in the end become tiresome; but we may briefly say that there were soldiers from all parts of the empire, and each in the dress peculiar to his country. The Cossacks of all kinds with their varied jackets and wide pantaloons, their troops bristling with the long lances peculiar to them. Then there were the Calmucs, with gilded heads, and covered with sparkling chain mail, with their bows and arrows slung behind their backs.

The Circassians have also bows and arrows, but are not as fully clad in chain mail, which is limited to a gorget and skirt. They ride chiefly beautiful Arabian horses. The Tartars were also conspicuous in the brilliancy of their dress,

the caps being particularly remarkable, formed by a ring of woolly sheepskin, with the wool standing straight out all round; some were of a snowy whiteness, whilst others again were dyed of a jet black; the crown of the cap was embroidered with gold. But it is only invidious to single out particular instances for remark, where all is so well worthy of notice. The immense variety of brilliant uniform was rendered more interesting from the comparatively primitive equipment of some of the regiments of the east; their savage appearance, their bows and arrows, round shields and gaudy dresses gave them rather the appearance of a theatrical tableau than a thing of real life. It was certainly the most gorgeous spectacle that we ever witnessed, and one that cannot be seen anywhere but in Russia, for no other kingdom can concentrate so many conquered nations into one capital, and still each retain its nationality in such perfection, and yet, even in Russia, it was considered splendid in the extreme. Amongst the immense crowd assembled to witness it were people from the extremities of the empire: one poor man, who had come from the most distant part of Finland, brimful of

patriotism and excitement, had given no one knows how much to get upon a crowded stand, in order that he might have a good look at the beloved Emperor, whom he might perhaps never see more than the once, and we can imagine the importance of a good view to an unsophisticated provincial, who would be called upon to recite the utmost particulars of the spectacle to his less fortunate neighbours when he returned home. He had, at an immense sacrifice, secured this desideratum, and crushing eagerly to be in the foremost rank, at last got jammed to his satisfaction just in time, for the cavalcade was approaching, and the excited people behind were calling out, hats off! hats off! Our poor friend strove to raise his arms for the purpose, but alas they were pinioned to his side by the pressure of the crowd; at last some impatient spectator behind, indignant at his delay, stretched out his hand and drove down the hat over his eyes, shutting out the whole world at one blow. The poor fellow called out piteously for some one to raise it, but all were too busy enjoying the scene before them to mind the poor unfortunate Finn, who, by one fatal stroke, had lost the best few minutes of his life. Imagine

there was the utmost order preserved, although their excitement seemed to know no bounds. Their cheers were terrific, and the dense mass streaming after the carriage really lifted us off our feet many times before it became tranquil enough for us to make our way out of it. This was our last night in St. Petersburg, and it was weary work getting home to the hotel; but we had no annoyance in doing so, no disorderly fellows to avoid, no active policemen putting down superfluous enjoyment; in fact, we woke next morning with the consciousness that yesterday had been a great day in Russia.

CHAP. XXXIV.

As usual at the end of all great undertakings, there was a good deal to be done to-day that should have been done before, and, although we did not intend starting until evening, still the day appeared far too short for all we wanted to cram into it. It may seem remarkable that, with such a road before us, we should leave our departure until night; but, in fact, that was the cause, for, at Jambourg, some distance from the capital, our road crossed the Luga by a bridge of boats, and it was so extremely dangerous, on account of the steep descent and nature of the bridge, that it was necessary to be there in daylight. To do this we must spend a night and part of the next day upon the road before arriving there. There was also another reason for it; there was so much to be done, so many ceremonies to be gone through, and such a folio of papers to

obtain on the day of departure, that it would be mid-day before we could leave the capital under any circumstances. Having made up our minds on this point, we bustled about in earnest to get ready, and a real bustle it was. The old carriage was brought home and overhauled, the coachbuilder's account was also overhauled, and considerably improved by the operation, at least for us. The papers were obtained, and, would you believe it, we absolutely thought of our books, which had been given up for lost. Fortunately they had arrived at the English consul's on the day before, and our library went home with us without having been of use to any one in Russia but the moths and perhaps a few spiders. Besides food for the mind, however, our former experience had warned us to provide food for the body, which we did by packing a loaf of bread, a tongue, some ham, boiled eggs, two bottles of wine and one of brandy, in a little basket. The next business was to provide the carriage with refreshment in the shape of schmiere, new ropes and other minutiæ, of the importance of which the reader has already some idea. Then the luggage. Oh, that dreadful luggage! Dear

reader, do not take much luggage when you go to Russia, especially if it is of a kind that objects to being strapped on a carriage by any but professional strappers. Ours would not. The dvorniks were either horribly stupid or the luggage dreadfully obstinate; for I believe, if my husband and a friend had not undertaken the task themselves, it would not have been done even now, and after all we had to pay them for it. In fact, there was a constant stream of roubles running from our pockets the whole day. The commissionaire who took the order for the horses must have a rouble, the man who came to say they were ready must have another, and we verily believe that, if the horses themselves could have spoken, they would have asked for roubles. Oh, I was angry at their extortion; but it could not be avoided, and the only thing left was to rejoice when it was over. Well, it did get over at last, and on the fifteenth of October, at half past eight in the evening, the wheels of our carriage made the first turn on the road towards home. Their creak had music in it, and dark though the night was, and long as the distance appears, still at the end of it we could see an illumination between

the bright bars of our own cosy fireplace in England, and the design was HOME; but soon a cloud came over it, the fire went out, every bar became a post house, black and dirty, and the cold began to gnaw at our very bones; the frost was sharp and keen, and the roads as hard as glass for the whole distance to Strelna, at which place we had been led to expect beds and some approach to comfort, but none were to be had; and, although it was the best of all the post houses, there was nothing for it but to recline as we were upon the sofas until morning, when we made another start. The hardness of the roads this time prevented our wheels sinking, as they had done before; but then the bruising thumps were just as bad, with the addition of the most intense cold. All the old grievances turned up at the post houses; they were just as bad or worse than before. We soon fell into our old routine of action, my duty being to attend to padaroshna matters, and my husband's to pay the roubles and examine the vehicle, which of course had the usual train of casualties. All went comparatively well for a while. Once, however, we got a fright by my perceiving, in the middle of the night, whilst it was my turn to

watch, that there was a man upon the luggage behind. I remembered the murder, and did not feel comfortable, but wakened my husband quietly, and after some explanation from the man, cap in hand, he was allowed to remain where he was. The necessity of sleeping only one at a time was caused by the danger of the yamstchik falling asleep from the intense cold, and it became the duty of the one on guard to call out to him frequently for the purpose of making sure. We were exulting in our good fortune with the weather until the nineteenth, when, at four o'clock in the morning, the rain began to pour down, and we thought we were lost; for the vision of floods, soft roads broken by the frost, and the intense cold, all presented themselves in comfortless array. We had been making up our minds to rest a day or two at Riga, but, in consequence of some advice received from a baron whom we fell in with, a few posts before getting there, we passed through it just about supper time, with great strength of purpose, determining to get over our troubles at once rather than give way to the luxury of a night's rest, which would only prolong our pain. It was a great stretch of moral

courage to drive straight through a town without even looking at it, when the inhabitants were quietly preparing for the rest we so much needed; but we sat firm, set our teeth together, and thumped away into the middle of the forest on the other side. Hour after hour wore on, the sun kept rising and setting, our wheels still ran round, and the number of thumps were increasing by thousands until at last we caught sight of *Tauroggen*, and tumbled into the yard of the post-house, about half-past nine o'clock in the morning of the twenty-first.

The first important transaction was the consumption of Tchai, which formed our breakfast. The next was to make our way to the Custom House, in order that our passports might be examined; we had always been accustomed to a good deal of delay, but this time it extended beyond the usual limits, and during the time we were waiting for the return of our papers, which had been formally given up to the officials, several of them kept passing and repassing through the chamber in which we were. We soon perceived that there was something wrong, for there was a cynical sort of smile on their countenances, which, in some, seemed

almost ready to become a malicious laugh. At last, by the time we had been worked to a high pitch of impatience, and almost a little fear, one of them accosted me with some such question as "Who are you?" and "What are you doing here?" Both of which were addressed to me personally, and of course, I replied, as I thought, most explicitly, "that I was the gentleman's wife;" but to my astonishment he replied that "It was not true! that I was not with him at all! that I was not his wife, and had no business there!" Here was a precious state of affairs bursting upon us, after having gone through so much, and paid dearly for our papers, to be told we had no business together. In proof of his assertion he said that my name was not in the passport. Visions of a gaol rose before my eyes, and an imprisonment of no one knows how many days until matters were set right, which could only have been done by my husband going back alone to the British consul, at Riga. In a fright I snatched the treacherous paper from his hands, and turned it over to every side, until, at last, my eyes alighted upon some German writing, which proved to be my credentials, and on showing it to him, he only

shrugged his shoulders, and said that the officer who read German was absent, and that my name ought to have been upon the Russian side also; this, it appears, had been omitted, and hence our alarm.

The passport had been made out to free us to Berlin, at which point we were to leave the protection of the Czar, and travel under that of our own nation, afforded by our passport from the English Secretary of State. Even after this explanation the man was so long away that we were not at peace for some time, and when he did return it was only with a new torture; his question this time was, "Have you any imperials,"* to which my husband replied by looking as if he did not understand anything more than that they wanted to see his money bag, and accordingly opened it for their inspection. They were disappointed to find that it contained only roubles, and told him to shut it up again. There is a law which renders it culpable to take gold out of Russia, and those which he had concealed about him would have been confiscated had they been found. At last we got off, and were soon delighted to find a

* The imperial is a gold coin equal to ten roubles.

finish to our troubles in Russia approaching, for in a short time we arrived within sight of that important piece of wood, *The Bar*. There it was exactly in the same position as when it went down behind us and shut us in, looking as though it had never been moved since, and no one can ever know the pleasure with which we saw it rise to let us out. It seemed as though a nightmare was lifted off our hearts as it rose in the air, and we brightened up the moment our backs were turned to it. We had perceived a telega following us upon the road, and knowing that at the next post-house it would be first come first served with horses, we were afraid that the detention at the Prussian bar and Custom-house, which is only a few yards further on, would allow the other carriage to pass us; we, therefore, offered the yamstchik a premium if he would put on speed enough to save us, and sure enough he did, for the moment the Prussian bar was reached he dashed through, past the astonished Custom-house officers, who ran screaming after us, and on to the post-house, which is close to; and to our great joy we looked up with happy faces to the ugly countenance of our old friend the black

Prussian eagle. Our chance of the horses was saved, and our clever driver could afford to suffer the abuse he received from the officials for taking us past their bounds without stopping, to all of which he turned a deaf ear, by saying "he did not understand," looking wickedly at us all the time, and jingling the kopecks in his pocket. On our side we were profuse in apologies, which had a splendid effect, for the obstreperous officer became a polite gentleman, and, taking our passport in his hand, walked back, and in time returned with it duly authenticated. He did not even bother us about the luggage, but took our words for it, and on we went in a new country fairly out of Russia, and feeling very like birds let out of a cage. Dear reader, you do not forget that all this journey back from St. Petersburg has been through the same places and with much the same adventures as our journey there; but you may have forgotten that we provided ourselves with something to eat when we started, because it has not been mentioned, but the fact is, it had been sparingly used, for so terrified were we of a break-down or any other thing that could detain us amongst the black bread of the Mujik that

we had put ourselves on the shortest of short allowance, and saved our provisions until now; but no sooner had we bowled away from the Black Eagle than we set to like wolves, and after six days' half starvation, we had a splendid feast off our old dry loaf and the tongue with a gusto that would have done credit to an alderman. Everything was improved; the roads were like a drawing room floor, the postilions were gentlemen, and we were without a trouble, except the doubts about the soundness of our carriage; we arrived in course of time at Königsberg. It was a fearfully cold morning, at about four o'clock, and we could scarcely believe, as the wheels made their last turn, that our journey was over; it did not seem real; it was too good to be true. We had been looking forward to nice soft beds, a good breakfast, quiet rest, and eatable food; altogether it was dreadfully exciting, but when I got to bed all was confusion. It was now seven days since I had had my clothes off, and I had expected to be asleep in a twinkling of an eye, but no sooner had I fully prepared for it than my head began to swim, the old rumbling and crashing of the carriage returned, and, in fact, I became ill, I

could not sleep, and was obliged to remain in bed the whole of the day and all the next night. My husband, on the other hand, rested well enough, and would have also remained in bed the whole day, but he was so dreadfully hungry that he got up, went down to dinner, and ate enough for both of us, as I could not take anything; indeed I felt almost as though I should never want any more. But besides his feat at the table he achieved another good thing, and that was disposing of the poor old carriage. We had at one time talked of bringing the old thing home, as a faithful servant that deserved to be taken care of in its old age, but there were too many difficulties in the way, and, on examination, it turned out that we really could not have gone another post without a serious break-down, for one of the wheels was in a very bad condition, the tire broken, and the spokes loose; but he had energy enough, notwithstanding his fatigue, first to find purchasers for the carriage, and then drive a hard bargain, and *then*, but not till *then* did he go to bed again, and take the rest he so much wanted.

There is now very little more to tell. Our history has begun and ended with the poor old

vehicle, towards which even now we cannot help but feel a little attachment, and as its career is closed we may fairly say that our work is concluded; but still we must satisfy the reader that we did not remain at Königsberg for want of a conveyance. The railway took us on to Bromberg, at which place I became so ill that we could proceed no further without *Brust Thee* and a night's nursing, after which we went on to Berlin, from Berlin to Paris, from Paris home, and here we are "fighting our battles o'er again," and enjoying them so much that we wish they may be equally productive of pleasure to those who shared none of the pain.

LAST CHAPTER.

The moral at the end of the fable is usually the most useful and least agreeable part for the reader; but at the same time it is so necessary that the story would be almost nothing without it; so it is in some degree with this our last chapter, which, although necessarily dry and uninteresting, must be added to render the whole of what we have already written fully intelligible. We have been rambling for our pleasure amongst a people respecting whom the ideas of Englishmen have been probably farther astray than about those of any other nation, and until brought more prominently into the sphere of our observation by the political events of the last year or two, the Russian was believed to be something in human form, but partaking largely of the nature of the bears and wolves with which nature has associated him. The moral condition of the country was placed on scarcely

a better understanding, for slavery, Siberia, and the knout were all that was ever dwelt upon in speaking of it. No one ever heard of a Russian invention, except leather and bears' grease, and the religion of the country was a total myth. The Greek Church, although perfectly understood by scholars, was to the people generally only another word for rank heathenism. Now, without endeavouring to refute all that may be wrong in these ancient opinions, or argue the cause of any that may be right, we will endeavour to give the reader an opportunity of doing it for himself, by telling him the results of our own observations; he will then, by using the same facts, probably arrive at the same conclusions as we have done: that Russia, although bad enough, is not so bad as she has been represented, and bad as she is, there is not only capability but evidences of improvement.

In dealing with the character of a country it is usual to consider its history a little; for that we must refer the reader to his memory or the books he used to read at school. We did not see it, and do not know all about it, and shall therefore not attempt to meddle with a matter for which we do not feel fully prepared. At

whatever point their civilization began, whether with Ivan the Terrible or Peter the Great, they are still a long way behind in the race, and, notwithstanding the evidences of high life and development so much displayed in the capital, it is but French polish upon inferior material. The groundwork—the foundation of it all—the country itself, is essentially barbarous and uncivilized.

The area of all Russia, which is upwards of six million geographical square miles, is usually compared with that of England, to the magnification of its importance; but it must be remembered that the possessions of Russia, in detail, Poland, Finland, Siberia, Tartary, and so on, bear only the same relation to Russia proper, that Australia, Canada, India, and our other possessions do to Great Britain, and it is probable that the balance, both of area and population, would be considerably in our favor if it were calculated in that way. The number of Russian subjects is estimated at seventy millions, which, however, are very unequally distributed, and as various in their character as a North American from a Japanese. There is, however, this advantage which the Czar

possesses over almost all other monarchs, that his dominion is in one piece, and that, if he felt so disposed, he could make a tour by land to any part of it; but we imagine that it will be long before such a feat is performed, for, at this time, there is scarcely a road in the whole country, with the exception of the fine one constructed especially for the Emperor between the two capitals, Moscow and St. Petersburg. Railways are scarcely known, for the one between the same places, and that to Zarskoselo, cannot be looked upon as anything more than mere toys, in a commercial point of view, when compared with the vastness of the empire.

The difficulties of opening up communications of the kind over the whole country cannot surely be invincible, for it is, as a general rule, flat and unbroken; in parts, however, it is, no doubt, covered with wood, and in others hard enough, from the granite which is so plentiful, but there are ways of overcoming all these objections, and, in fact, turning them into advantages. We were particularly struck with an evidence of a difference between our own countrymen and theirs, as we passed through the parts of the country where for miles the

fields, in which the corn was growing, were thickly covered with huge boulders of granite. In England, they would, most likely, by some means have been rolled to the fences, and the ground cleared once for all; but here the corn is planted round about and amongst the stones, which are left standing like great excrescences that always seem out of place. It is the same with the stumps of trees which have been felled, the grain thriving as well as it can amongst their tangled roots.

The little interest which the tiller has in the land, and the carelessness of the noble who owns both, without, perhaps, ever seeing either, no doubt has much to do with this state of matters. The condition of serfdom, which is that of all Russian peasants, is scarcely one remove from absolute slavery; but it is asserted that he cannot be sold off the soil to which he belongs, but may be disposed of easily enough if that goes with the purchase. The question then arises with us how much ground must be sold with each slave? and we are inclined to believe that the protection to the poor Mujik is only nominal; he belongs, really and entirely, to his master or noble, and has no power even to give away a

lock of his own hair. If he wants to raise himself above his position, by exercising any ability which he may have discovered within himself, he has to buy his own services from his master at a heavy rate. Most servants and artizans are of this class, and pay to their noble, at stated periods, a certain sum, called *Abrok*, a per centage of their earnings, a fixed price at which he allows them the privilege of earning their own bread; this they must make up some way or other; and if he finds them making good use of their time, he can, if he chooses, raise the price of their partial freedom. They are, however, liable to be called back to him at any moment.

The Mujik is a gentle inoffensive fellow by nature, but soon learns all the vices of ignorance, to which, we think, more than anything, his faults are to be ascribed. He will steal, because it is almost his only means of acquiring property; he will drink, because it is one of the easiest means by which ignorance obtains excitement; but he is easily led by those who take the trouble to try to lead him. Look, for instance, at his blind devotion and his simple veneration for religious images. This arises

not from any terror of religious penances, as in the Romish Church, and is therefore all to his credit. If his secular education was tended with equal care, Russia might be able to share the boast of other countries, that their peasants have furnished enlightened men as well as their aristocracy, and that intellect knows no nobility but its own. What should we think of a tradesman or station master who had to count upon a frame of beads,* as we have seen their postmasters and shopkeepers doing. Their scientific institutions are no doubt framed upon the models of those in other countries, and in some cases surpass them, as, for instance, the Geological Museum in St. Petersburg; but it requires something more than the mere possession of the means to render them useful. The desire has not yet been sufficiently awakened in the minds of the lower classes, or rather of the low class *par excellence;* for there are but the two—serfs and nobles. It is in every way to the interest of the latter to keep their poor slaves as they are, ignorant and dependent; for otherwise there must inevitably be a struggle

* Called *Schot*

for freedom, and a decrease in the power of the aristocracy.

The wealth of some of the nobles is amazing, one count, near Moscow, owns no fewer than a hundred and thirty thousand serfs. What immense responsibility such a man must have for good or evil! If all these men were soldiers, such an one might be a king elsewhere. The soldiers of the nation are, as we have seen in the provinces, much neglected. Their necessities are very antagonistic to their honesty, and their calling gives them so much power, that a troop of soldiers is dreaded by the farmers as a horde of locusts. We have ourselves seen them foraging about the fields, and filling their pouches with potatoes, evidently with the approval of their officers, who laughed at us as though they thought the trick a good one; no doubt it was good for the soldiers, as they are but badly provided with means of obtaining sufficient food. They are under the double disadvantage of having little pay and living in a country where everything is dear; for instance cheese three shillings and fourpence a pound, and tea at prices almost fabulous. We actually brought some away with us at about two guineas

a pound; but it really is the most delightful specimen of the herb that can be had. Of course we did a great many other foolish things, but then we acknowledge them, and expect to be forgiven. We remember with pleasure that, in spite of all our troubles we did not willingly do any one any injury, except one poor old man, who had watched our luggage at a post-house, and was out of the way when we went off; but if we ever go back again, and find him, he shall have his kopecks with interest.

The reader has travelled with us now for five thousand miles in one journey, and we have been highly pleased with his company. Let us hope that when next we visit Russia what are now misfortunes may no longer exist, and that her advantages may be increased in all that tends to the benefit of mankind and universal peace.

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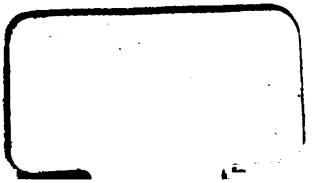
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